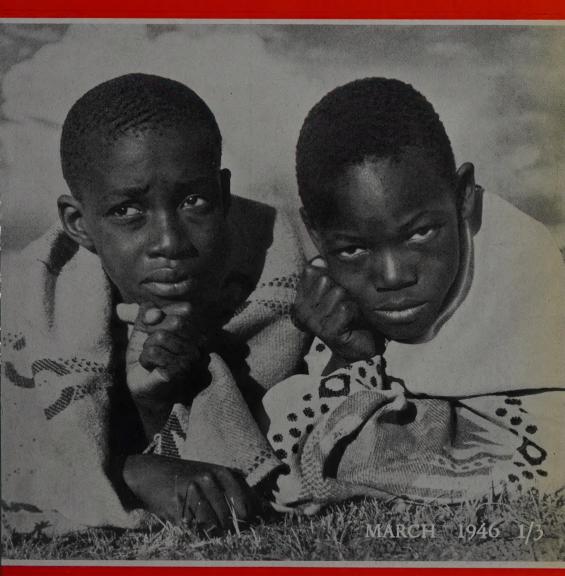
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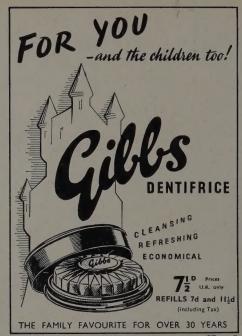
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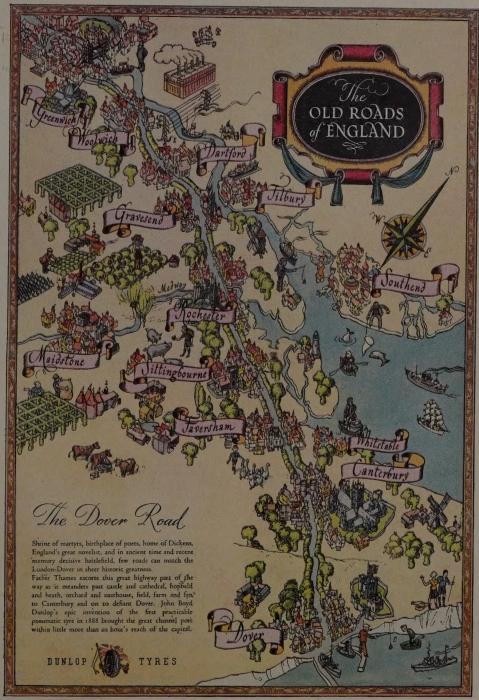
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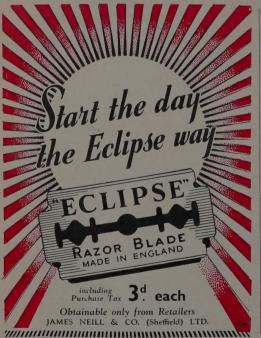


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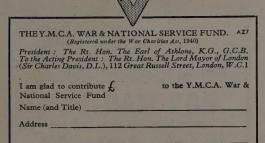
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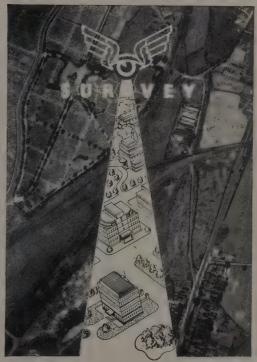
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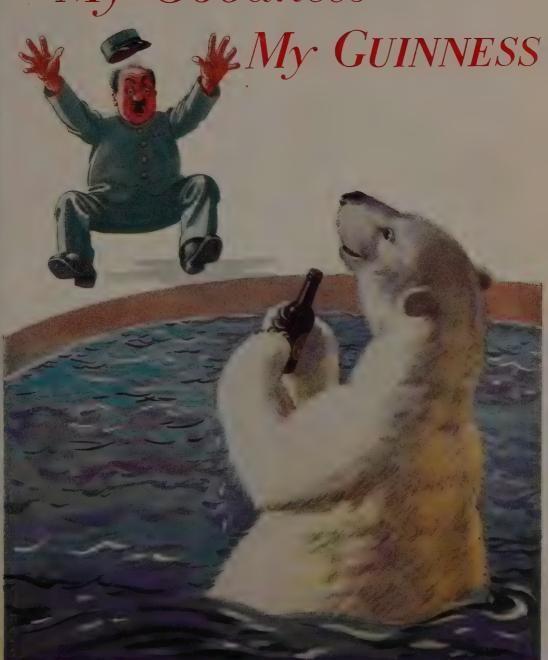


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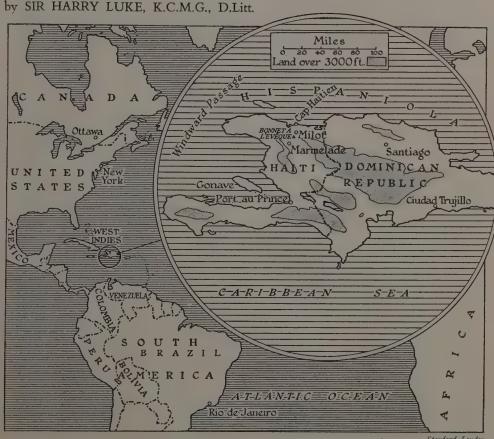


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# The King of Haiti and His Citadel



Stanford, London

It is a remarkable circumstance that one of the architectural wonders of the Western Hemisphere—I refer not to the pre-Columbian achievements of Aztecs, Mayas and Incas but to modern times—should be situated in the coloured Republic of Haiti, itself only the smaller part of a Caribbean island. It is equally remarkable that this wonder should have been the creation of a slave-born negro, and that the ex-slave should have wrought it not only by the labours of a reluctant people but at a time when the greater part of his own country was in the hands of a rival ruler. The wonder is the Castle of La Ferrière, commonly called La Citadelle, which surmounts a triple group of peaks in the north of Haiti, the Bonnet à l'Évêque; its builder was Henri Christophe, King of Haiti from 1811 to 1820, and perhaps next to Toussaint l'Ouverture, the architect of Haitian independence, the greatest negro who has ever lived.

A few words of historical retrospect may be useful as the background of a description of

this astonishing monument.

Towards the end of the 18th century the island which Columbus named Hispaniola and was then known as Saint Domingue was one of the richest colonies which the Old World possessed in the New. The western part, now the Republic of Haiti, belonged to the King of France, across whose path the impending Revolution was about to cast its ominous shadow; the eastern part, now the Dominican Republic, belonged to the King of Spain. The language of the western part was and is a French ranging from the patois of the black peasantry to the purest Parisian of the lighter-coloured élite; the language of the

eastern part was and is Spanish. The passions released in France by the fall of the Bastille in 1789 found their echo in Saint Domingue, the French part of which then supported a population of 30,000 whites, 27,000 free mulattoes—known as the affranchis although their freedom was partly theoretical, and mostly planters—and about half a million black slaves. The National Convention in 1791 granted the demand of the affranchis for full civil rights but almost immediately withdrew the concession. The infuriated mulattoes then joined forces with the slaves in the plantations, who now decided to rise against the French, and for some years the island was in confusion. Some sort of order was finally restored by a sickly, middle-aged negro slave called François-Domingue Toussaint, afterwards known as l'Ouverture, the 'Opening', because of his success on one occasion in opening a gap in the ranks of the enemy. This unlikely little man, who was to develop military talents which compelled the reluctant French to appoint him Governor-General of Saint Domingue for life and aroused the jealousy, even the anxiety, of Bonaparte as First Consul, sought to emancipate the people without breaking away from France. Bonaparte would have none of this and sent his brotherin-law, General Leclerc, to reduce Toussaint to unconditional surrender. Leclerc died in the island of yellow fever, his expedition a failure, but four months later Toussaint died too, in a bleak prison cell of a fort in the Jura, having made his submission on promises of emancipation and freedom for all which Bonaparte had no intention to keep.

In St Helena, wise after the event, Napoleon spoke of Saint Domingue as the greatest blunder of his career. Toussaint's work was taken up by one of his principal lieutenants, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, also slave-born, who led his people, seething with fury at Toussaint's betrayal, with such effect that the French evacuated the island in 1803 and never returned. A few months after Bonaparte's assumption of the title of Emperor of the French, Dessalines replaced the white man's name of Saint Domingue by the aboriginal name of Haiti and in October 1804

was crowned Emperor of Haiti as Jean Jacques I.

For reasons not affecting this narrative Dessalines soon lost his popularity and two years after his coronation was deposed and killed. The Haitians, as we must now call them, then turned to Toussaint's other principal henchman, a slave-born native of one of the British West Indian islands who went by the name of Henri Christophe, a name thought by some to indicate his birth in the island of St Christopher or St Kitts, although he was probably born in Grenada. In 1808 Henri Christophe was elected President for four years, but two years later it was felt that the additional authority of a crown would help to stabilize the country's independence. Bonaparte and Dessalines between them had made Empire unpopular in Haiti, so Henri became a King; but he became more than that. He became the greatest administrator the negro race has hitherto produced, and this despite the handicap that his political rival, the mulatto Pétion, had established himself as President in the southern part of Haiti. Port-au-Prince, Haiti's present capital and largest city, lay in Pétion's territory, so Henri chose for his capital the little town of Milot at the foot of the Bonnet à l'Evêque, only a few miles from the important northern port of Cap-Haïtien. Here he set up all the apparatus of orderly government, including mint, printing press, Theatre Royal, even a Royal Academy of Music. Henri had imagination, he recognized the country's needs, possessed driving force to a degree rare in tropical peoples, and he knew how to make his people work.

One of the means devised by the ingenious King to make his people work was the creation of a feudal aristocracy, feudal because his nobles were landowners who had to make the best use of their lands under the penalty of forfeiting them if they neglected them, and of reverting to the status of ordinary labourer. By thus causing the soil to be exploited Henri gave his country a favourable trade balance; he created a stable currency and a system of credit; he established manufactures; he brought Haiti from bankruptcy to solvency and ultimately to wealth. Medical and social services were organized; nothing escaped that restless brain. His legislative activity was prodigious and is enshrined in the Code Henri; and, as the present forceful and able President of Haiti, His Excellency Élie Lescot, said to the writer in Port-au-Prince in 1945, "he legislated to make a people marry which still today, except for the small élite, lives in concubinage". But of all his achieve-



Painting loaned by Captain Bruce Ingram to the Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery

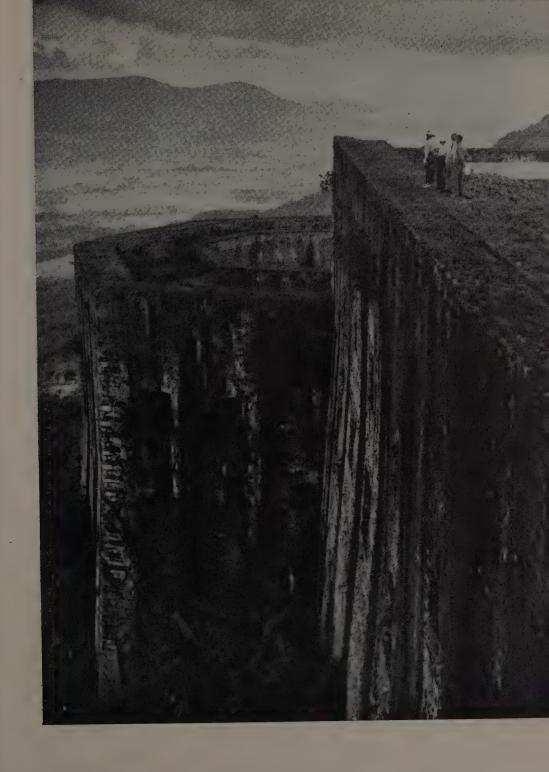
Henri Christophe, King of Haiti 1811-1820; from the State portrait by Richard Evans

## La Ferrière

(Right) The Citadel of La Ferrière from the north, "larger and more massive than the Tower of London", crowning the central peak of the Bonnet à L'Évêque. (Below) The terrace leading to the entrance is approached only by a mule-track. (Opposite) The upper walls, looking towards Cap-Haïtien









The property of Sir Harry Luke
A piece of equipment of Henri Christophe's Royal Guard. Made
in Britain, it bears the King's coat-of-arms and motto

ments the most spectacular was the gigantic stronghold above Milot which was to be the citadel of his kingdom against a return of the French, the citadel of his dynasty against enemies at home.

One of Henri's biographers has called La Ferrière " a fortress larger and more massive than the Tower of London . . . the most impressive structure ever conceived by a negro's brain or executed by black hands in all the world in the tens of thousands of years of the race's history". And, indeed, it remains, as Henri intended it to be, the feat whereby his people could win their selfrespect, the black man's greatest physical creation. Unfortunately for Henri his people, as will appear, failed to share this ambition on their behalf. La Ferrière is the name of the highest and central peak of the triple Bonnet à l'Évêque, the other two being Ramier and Diamant; and it rises nearly 3000 feet above Milot nestling at the edge of the plain. The

sides of the mountain are with dense: and luxuriant vegetation and are divided. precipitous though they are, into small peasant holdings. No road facilitated the assembling of the material and the dragging of hundreds of great bronze cannon up the mountain, nor does anything more than a mule-track lead to the summit today. La Citadelle has truly to be seen to be believed.

The castle surrounds rather than tops the peak of La Ferrière, and the rock actually projects here and there within the enceinte. In outline and general design I would describe it as a modern version of the great Crusading castles of Syria, especially the mighty fortress of Krak des Chevaliers which the Arabs call Oalat al-Hosn. But seen from the north it almost suggests a battleship end-on, for one of its most remarkable features is a sort of prow projected to the end of the summit like the ram of some gigantic ship. It was designed to accommodate a garrison of 10,000 men; its walls rise to a height of 130 feet and more; the complexity of its corridors, galleries, treasure-chambers,

cisterns, powder-magazines, dungeons and arsenals is such that the justification for the notices warning visitors against wandering about the interior without a guide soon becomes apparent. Many of the great bronze cannon still lie in position on their mahogany carriages in the gun-corridor 270 feet long by 30 feet wide, and at random elsewhere in and around the castle; 365 of these monsters, many weighing 5 tons, are believed to have been hauled up the forbidding slopes by the toiling Haitians. Some, I noticed, bore the emblem of the Roi Soleil; others were Spanish; not a few were British of the reigns of George II and George III. On one of the British guns I saw the arms of the Churchill family with their Spanish motto "Fiel Pero Desdichado"—whose general sense is "bloody but unbowed"-above the royal arms of George II. It must date from the years 1755-1758, when the third Duke of Marlborough was Master-General of the Ordnance. In his



A. A. L. Tusan

With its sweeping double staircase, now in process of restoration, the royal Palace of Sans-Souci near Milot bears witness even in ruin to its builder's grand imagination and force of character

great castle, as elsewhere in his realm, Henri thought of everything; and everywhere are signs of his successful preoccupation with the problems of water conservation and ventilation.

As Bonaparte blundered in Haiti over the Leclerc expedition, so was La Ferrière the canker that killed Henri, for, try as he would, he could not make his people love work for its own sake, especially with Pétion's Republicans in the south ever urging that the régime in the kingdom was more oppressive than the slavery of the French. One of the King's most powerful Generals, Richard, Duke of Marmelade (a village in northern Haiti), incurred the King's displeasure and was made to work on the Citadel for three months. The Duke bided his time but swore to be revenged. His opportunity came earlier than he expected. Henri never slept for more than five hours out of the twenty-four, and worked at high pressure during the rest. One Sunday, while hearing mass—it was in August 1820he had a stroke, and with the power over his body went the power over his people, dominated as they had been by the physical vitality of the man. All their pent-up resentment at the work that Henri had made them do, at the harshnesses of his later years, all the longing to share the dolce far niente of Pétion's subjects in the south, over-ran the country like wildfire. The King's troops abandoned him, and Henri, magnificent to the last, shot himself with a golden bullet prepared for some such emergency as this.

In the open, in the middle of the courtyard of the Citadel, is a plain white structure adorned only with a tablet bearing this

inscription:

Ci-gît
Le Roi Henry Christophe
Né le 6 Octobre 1767
Mort le 20 Octobre 1820
Dont la Devise est
'Je Renais de mes Cendres'

But there are no royal ashes within that tomb. When his devoted family carried the heavy body up the mountain on the night of his death (the date of which is misquoted on the inscription—it should be October 8), it was plunged into quicklime that happened to be lying where the cenotaph now stands. The only other tomb in the fortress, whose construction is said to have cost so many lives, is that of the King's nephew, Prince Noel, killed by the explosion of a powder-magazine. This Prince's motto was, prophetically, "Il est beau de mourir pour son roi".

Henri was British-born, his mother-tongue was probably English, and throughout his career he was a firm friend and admirer of Great Britain. He corresponded with Clarkson and Wilberforce on the abolition of the slave-trade; his physician was a Scotsman; his State portrait—a magnificent presentment of the man in white breeches, yellow top-boots and green Napoleonic tunic—was painted by Richard Evans, the pupil of Sir Thomas Lawrence; and from Britain, Haiti's best customer, he ordered among many other things the accoutrements of the Royal Guard. I had the good fortune to buy at the Citadel from some of the local peasants who had there unearthed them some beautifully made pieces of equipment and buttons with the King's full coat-of-arms: the phoenix, to which his motto has reference, rising from the flames, with two lions as supporters. At the back of the buttons with their heavy gilding can be read the English words "treble gilt". There was nothing niggardly or cheap about Henri; he did things well.

The King's quarters in the Citadel are utilitarian and austere; the softer refinements and luxuries of life were reserved for the royal Palace of Sans-Souci just above Milot. This ornate and terraced edifice of stuccoed brick set in luxuriant tropical surroundings and approached by a sweeping double staircase was regarded at the time, possibly with justice, as the finest mansion in the New World. It was richly furnished and adorned with valuable European furniture and works of art; its floors were of inlaid native woods; the mountain stream of the luscious valley behind the Palace was canalized to run underneath the building to keep the State apartments cool. Once a week in these apartments, on Thursdays, King Henri and his Queen Marie-Louise held their Court, the King and Queen sitting on thrones on a raised dais, flanked by the Court officials, while the nobles and their consorts faced them on their foldingchairs, ranged in a semicircle. Three Princes, eight Dukes, twenty Counts, thirty-seven Barons and eleven Knights composed Henri's peerage, each with 'their regularly conferred and recorded armorial bearings. The original manuscript Armorial Général du Royaume d'Hayti, containing their complete blazons, is certainly not one of the less interesting possessions of the College of Arms in London. Under a large star-apple tree still standing at the side of the Palace Henri was wont to dispense open-air justice to his subjects, as in later years King Nicholas of Montenegro used to do in his garden at Tsetinje.

A catastrophic earthquake in 1842 very largely destroyed the Palace, which for years lay neglected, more and more overgrown with invading tropical vegetation. The present Haitian Administration has now, however, taken its preservation in hand. The structure is being cleared of jungle growth, and the learned and enthusiastic Haitian Curator of the Citadel and the Palace, Monsieur Louis Mercier, who is the Director of the Lycée at Cap-Haitien, is engaged in restoring the great staircase with some of its original stones that had found their way into the houses of Milot. Also severely damaged and unroofed by the earthquake was the adjoining "Royal and Parish Church of Sans-Souci". This has been completely restored in recent years, as the following inscription inside it bears witness:

Deo Optimo Maximo
Sacrum
Ab Henrico I° Rege
Pio VII Pontifice Maximo
Anno Circiter MDCCCXIII
Erectum

Stenio Vincent Haitianae Reipublicae Praeses
Pio XI Pontifice Maximo
Ioanne Maria Jan Episcopo Capitis Haitiani
Anno MCMXXXIII
Restauravit
'DGTP' Factore

Much loved at the beginning of his career, Henri Christophe died hated by his people, and of this revulsion of feeling his Citadel was the principal cause. In the Haiti of today this hatred is not yet forgotten, and the Haitian heroes now more generally acclaimed are Dessalines and Pétion, not the infinitely greater Toussaint l'Ouverture and Henri Christophe. But a more just appraisement of Henri's claim to the gratitude of his people is beginning to make itself felt; and he can certainly say on his mountain-top, as Wren said in St Paul's, "Si monumentum requiris, circumspice".

# Photography for Geographers

by D. A. SPENCER

The importance of photography to geographers was emphasized by the President of the Royal Geographical Society in our December, 1945, number. The latest developments in the technical equipment most suitable for their use are briefly surveyed in the following article by Dr Spencer of Messrs Kodak Ltd. In later articles he will describe the geographical uses of colour film and air photography



Thirty-five years ago a highly skilled photographer, with the aid of heavy and elaborate apparatus, could achieve results like this in the course of a geographical expedition. Can we now do better?

No modern geographical expedition would consider itself properly equipped without cameras, for by photography it is possible to collect in a fraction of a second quantitative and qualitative data for subsequent study which it would be impracticable to obtain in any other way.

But which sort of camera, and how to ensure that the records obtained are of maximum usefulness? The answer is not necessarily "The most expensive cameras we can afford" nor the ones most cluttered up with gadgets. After all, the Allied Air Forces brought us 80 per cent of the intelligence information we obtained from Occupied Europe after the fall of France by using what were in effect fixed-focus metal box cameras; and dimensional plans of buildings destroyed in the first world war were in some cases derived from amateur snapshots.

Although photography proved to be one of our most valuable and extensively used war weapons, no fundamentally new equipment or technique directly applicable to geographical research was developed, though existing techniques were frequently rendered more practical as a result of war-time experience.

Modern geographical expeditions have so many different objects that only the most general guidance can be offered as to the photographic equipment suitable. I shall therefore confine myself to describing briefly the most recent advances and trends in photographic technique that seem to have a geographical application, with the intention of supplementing the data available in standard textbooks.

#### TYPE OF CAMERA

Photographs produced by a cheap camera, in the proper hands, can be equivalent in quality to those made with the most expensive camera when both are used at the same lens aperture and shutter speed. Unless therefore the user is already an expert photographer, even the simple box camera is not to be despised as a general record maker for it has the merit of simplicity in construction and Under certain special conditions the simpler forms of camera are preferred to more elaborate types even by expert photographers. Thus the Everest explorer G. I. Finch found it very convenient to use a popular lowpriced amateur camera on his climbing expeditions. He simplified it yet further by soldering the shutter adjustment so that the camera would only give exposures of  $\frac{1}{50}$ th second. Always in focus, easily manipulated in gloves and with lighting conditions that varied very little, this camera gave equally good results with far less trouble than the more elaborate models he used on earlier climbing expeditions. Although he intended these photographs to be simple records of his climbs, many of them were of considerable technical interest, for in studying them he discovered new ways up mountains, planning future climbs during leisurely inspection of the prints. In one case the photographs revealed a 'chimney' in an apparently unclimbable rock. Study of another series showed him that avalanches fell from different places at certain definite times, and he was able to draw up a time-table by which he could dodge them. Professor Finch's photographs are however a special case, for alpine snapshots are made in good weather or not at all, and it is not seriously suggested that a camera costing a few shillings is adequate for the typical geographical expedition.

In recent years refined versions of the focusing box camera fitted with reflex finders—the so-called twin-lens reflex—have deservedly grown in popularity. The image is seen at full magnification on the viewing screen where focus and composition can be

judged, and it is safe to predict increasing popularity for cameras of this type, particularly with travellers.

#### MINIATURE CAMERAS

A miniature camera is, according to the Royal Photographic Society's definition, "one in which the image area is not greater than six square inches." The great majority of such cameras employ 35 mm. perforated film—the size used in standard cinematograph cameras. When first introduced, the graininess of the photographic materials available limited the usefulness of this film size; but the introduction of moderately fast, very fine grain photographic emulsions has rendered miniature negatives adequate for many purposes. Provided appropriate precautions are taken in processing, it is possible to produce excellent 15 × 12" enlargements from miniature negatives; a greater magnification than is normally required from a record photograph. In addition, without increasing appreciably the weight to be carried, a range of lenses from wide-angle to telephoto can be added to the equipment and photography becomes feasible at all distances from a few inches upwards under the most diverse lighting conditions (see pages 452 and 454).

#### LARGER CAMERAS

Unless accurate measurements are to be taken from the negatives there is little point in a negative size larger than  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ ". Moreover, few travellers nowadays would wish to burden themselves with the additional weight and inconvenience of glass plate negatives. If, however, weight is not a consideration plate cameras may still be reasonably advocated, at least up to  $5 \times 4''$  in size. For instance, it is possible from properly made photographs to deduce with great accuracy dimensions of buildings or such physical characteristics as cranial shapes, and a glass plate negative is then desirable. Colour photographers may also find it desirable to use cameras up to  $5 \times 4''$  negative size, since, although it is quite possible to make excellent magazine-size colour reproductions from miniature camera 'Kodachrome' transparencies, few blockmakers undertake the work with enthusiasm and even fewer are, as yet, properly equipped to make a really good job of such assignments.

#### LENSES

Perhaps the chief advance in optics from the ordinary photographer's point of view has been the demonstration that the alleged superiority of German camera lenses, often



S. Smythe

These two photographs exemplify the results obtained with (above) and without (below) a yellow filter which emphasizes the detail in shadows, distance and cloud forms. A red filter would darken the blue sky considerably, adding to dramatic effect and assisting slightly in penetrating haze. The urfiltered photograph is one of 12,000 made by Prof. Finch with a simple, fixed-exposure camera

G. I. Finch





Elspeth Huxley from Paul Popper

Contact prints illustrating the value of the unobtrusive miniature camera for obtaining portraits or rapid sequences of low-cost, trial and error photographs in an eminently storable form

claimed before the war, resided solely in the advertisements! Direct comparisons under the most stringent test conditions have shown that British and American photographic lenses were superior at each stage of the war to their nearest German equivalent. Moreover, in some cases—notably the British 36" aero lens-not only was photographic performance higher but the design was appreciably simpler than foreign counterparts.

As a result of war-time researches directed by the Air Photography Research Committee of the Ministry of Aircraft Production, there is now a much clearer understanding of the fundamentals underlying good design of photographic objectives. New forms of optical glass pioneered by Kodak have simplified the design of some of the more complex lenses-in particular the wide-angle types where freedom from flare is easier to avoid with the shallower curves that these new glasses have made possible. A great deal of interest was aroused and exaggerated claims have been made for the advantages of surfacetreating photographic lenses to increase image contrast and working speed. This treatment is undoubtedly of value in visual optical apparatus and in wide-angle camera lenses where intersurface reflections are often embarrassing. The gain in working speed is however unimportant and the surface treatment of normal camera lenses is no substitute for an adequate lens hood—a far more important desideratum.

#### FILTERS

A medium yellow and a tricolour red are the two most useful colour filters for general photography. As a minimum they add to the pictorial effect of a photograph without necessarily increasing its usefulness as a record (compare the illustrations on page 451). They increase penetration of heat haze and help to emphasize modelling and texture in sunlit subjects. For special purposes, however, such as the differentiation between various hues of green which might be desirable in forestry work, special filters are required, and the photographic manufacturers' service departments will make recommendations if the type of work is described to them. Although filters can be used in the



In clear weather infra-red telephotography yields interesting rather than valuable records; certain

vegetation appears very light, water and shadows very dark. The English coast from Cape Gris Nez

form of gelatin leaves, it is much to be preferred that they should be mounted in good quality optical glass. Mounting is essential if the filters are to be used in other than temperate climates.

#### FILMS

One of the most frequent mistakes the amateur photographer makes is to judge the quality of a film by its working speed. It is a safe generalization that the higher the working speed of any film, the more grainy will be the negative, the smaller the permissible errors in exposure and the more limited the ability to render satisfactorily the infinite range of tones between black and white. Accordingly, a good general rule is: for maximum quality choose the film with the lowest practical working speed. Between those low-speed, specially fine-grain materials designed for critical work in which big enlargement will be required, and the very highspeed but relatively grainier films used for work under poor lighting conditions, there is a range of medium speed all-purpose films of which Kodak Plus-X and Ilford F.P-2 are typical, and these can be strongly recommended for all but specialist work. Panchromatic film—that is, film sensitive to the whole of the visible spectrum—is now quite generally employed and colour filters are available for use in conjunction with it which will ensure, if this is desired, that the relative brightnesses of the various colours in the scene are recorded in the same ratio as they appear to the human eye.

#### INFRA-RED

Although the working speed of infra-red material has been brought to a point where snapshot exposures at moderately large apertures are possible, its value for other than special purposes is limited. In particular, the value of infra-red for long-distance photography or for the penetration of haze is generally overrated. Generally speaking, it will be found (as theory would lead one to expect) that when the visual range is less than 600 yards there is no increase obtainable by infra-red photography, while a visual range of 20 miles is only increased by about 20 per cent. There are, however, a number of



J. Allan Cash



The Castle of Neuschwanstein near Füssen in the Bavarian Alps, taken from the same viewpoint with a miniature camera using (above) a 5 cm. and (left) a 13.5 cm. telephoto lens

Telephoto lenses are valuable for making records of inaccessible places and wild life. A steady camera support is essential. Here again, the miniature camera scores since the larger the camera, the very much bulkier the telephoto lens

specialized uses of infra-red material which will be described in a later article on Air

Photography.

One war-time development which may have a limited peace-time application is the use of infra-red to make so-called invisible flash photographs. The conventional flash bulb is either coated with a visually opaque varnish transmitting infra-red rays or is enclosed in a light-tight, infra-red-transmitting filter bag. It then becomes possible for the photographer to make records at night or in dimly lit interiors under conditions where the use of normal flashlights would be impracticable or undesirable.

#### COLOUR FILM

Whereas infra-red material is of limited and specialized interest, the fact that colour photography has at last been simplified to the point where it is as easy to make records in colour as in black and white, and with the same equipment, is becoming increasingly important. Colour photography will therefore form the subject of a separate article in this series.

#### EXPOSURE ACCURACY

The exposure latitude available with modern black and white sensitive material is such that many photographers boast that they never use an exposure meter. If the black and white photographer, with no means at his disposal of estimating exposure, makes three records—one the best guess in the circumstances, one eight times more and one eight times less than this guess—there is fair certainty that a more or less useful record of some sort will result. The eye is however a most untrustworthy guide in estimating the brightness of a scene and for optimum quality -particularly in miniature camera worka reliable photoelectric exposure meter is strongly recommended. The ideal negative for printing-particularly when big enlargements are required—is somewhat thin and flat, and the exposure necessary to produce the best, as distinct from an acceptable, result cannot easily be judged by the unaided eye, however experienced.

#### PROCESSING IN THE FIELD

The sooner any type of film is processed after exposure, the better. In the tropics, unless exposed films can be processed within a few days, special storage precautions are very desirable.

War-time experience of processing under tropical conditions has resulted in the devising of greatly improved processing formulae and the introduction of chemicals which, when added in small amounts to developing solutions, minimize the risk of veiling when processing badly stored films at high temperatures. It would be misleading to summarize the detailed recommendations issued free of charge on application to the service departments of the photographic manufacturers.

## CARE OF EQUIPMENT IN EXTREME VARIATIONS OF CLIMATE

Here again the recently accumulated experience cannot safely be summarized. Eastman Kodak issue data sheets of detailed recommendations on precautions found desirable in dry and humid tropical regions, and in arctic or high-altitude conditions. Worked out in field laboratories set up in different parts of the world, these recommendations explain how to adapt equipment to the tropics and how to protect and maintain it in extreme climates. Such refinements as the protection of the lens surface by replaceable plain glass in the filter mount when operating in sandy deserts, or the value of a white slipon cover in very sunny regions, may seem obvious once they are pointed out; but the various methods of preventing fungus growth inside lenses, the type of lubricant required on shutters in arctic regions, and the safest way to store exposed and unexposed film in various climatic conditions, are not self-evident. These results of war-time experience in making photographs in the Burmese monsoon or the arctic winter can be had for the asking. Indeed, the best advice one could offer to any expedition equipping itself for photography is that it should always consult the service department of the photographic manufacturer whose materials it is proposed to use.

It is surprising how frequently this rather obvious step is ignored—or left until the last This may well be due to what Mortensen has called "the unhappy facility with which superficial photographic facts and procedures may be learned. When a man buys a camera, he considers himself ipso facto half a photographer. When he has owned it a week, he considers himself an advanced amateur. When he has owned it a month or so, he considers himself an authority. Every art has its mechanical dabblers and its. scientific dilettantes. But nowhere else do they so presume to run the show as in photography." This is one of the few sweeping statements made by this renowned pictorial photographer with which the author finds himself in agreement!

## Tell Africa

## An Experiment in Mass Education

by ALEC G. DICKSON

"IT is impossible to overestimate the importance of the continuous impregnation of the villages of the remote steppe or Siberian forest by the returning soldiers of the Red Army, alike in the promotion of national unity, in the stimulation of rural thought, and in the universal penetration of the Communist faith." Thus wrote the Webbs, some twenty years ago, of the part played by the Red Army in the education of the masses in Russia. This article tells the story of another effort, microscopic in comparison to that of the Soviet but pioneer in its character none the less, undertaken by a team of African soldiers, to bring home to the native peoples of East and Central Africa what the war meant to them in general and what obligations they owed to the Army in particular.

In the beginning it was only the hard necessity of providing recruits for the East Africa Command that created our Unit, and no aim so lofty as Mass Education. For it was no longer to an Africa such as Rider Haggard had described that we had to bring our message. There were, it is true, still Districts where the announcement that recruits were wanted would bring a flock of eager volunteers to Administrative Headquarters, where the young and fit would be chosen for the King's African Rifles, and those too old for combatant service could—in the curious phraseology current-join up as Boys. "Enslavement is no new experience to us Africans" (wrote one schoolboy), "and we should suffer most from German conquest, inasmuch as Hitler regards us as apes"-but this was a very 'official' standpoint, shared by few Africans, amongst the more primitive tribes.

Amongst the educated and the semieducated a vein of sophistication had taken hold that argued on the lines: "The Europeans told us not to fight—now they themselves start war." Or again, "Many European nations don't appear to understand why the war affects them, or they would have remained neutral: how, then, should Africans understand how the war affects them?" (One might write a book on the social and political implications, particularly in time of war, of our being known to Africans as 'the Europeans' rather than as 'the British'.) It was by this class of African, especially in Buganda, that rumours were being circulated to the effect that inoculations given to troops prior to embarkation were to render them sterile, and so forth. Clearly something more than the waving of an Army blanket and a tin of bully-beef in the faces of such people was

required. But what?

On the walls of African Council Halls and of Provincial Administration Offices could be seen posters sent out from Britain, some showing high-angle views onto the decks of aircraft carriers with the injunction to "Back Them Up!"-others, relating more specifically to the Empire's war effort, such as one we encountered in a school in the bush that proclaimed: "Canada, in addition to producing 90 per cent of the world's nickel . . . " What all this signified to the great mass of Africans, besides the rumours circulating of Germany's victories everywhere in Europe, we learnt within the first week of our work, when an old native messenger was overheard to mutter as he came away from our show: "Allah! so the English have tanks, too!"

With a Command equal in size to India, but with less than one twenty-fifth of India's population, something more radical—and yet at the same time more humane and personal —was needed, it seemed, if we were to reach peoples who were illiterate for the greater part, primitive in background, and diverse in language and custom. We decided upon a team of Askari, representative of the African soldier at his best and trained to interpret the war and the needs of the war to their own people. So, feeling at the outset rather as must have done the Seven against Thebes, we began a life of safari that was to last until the end of the war, to travel 30,000 miles, and to show to over a million Africans.

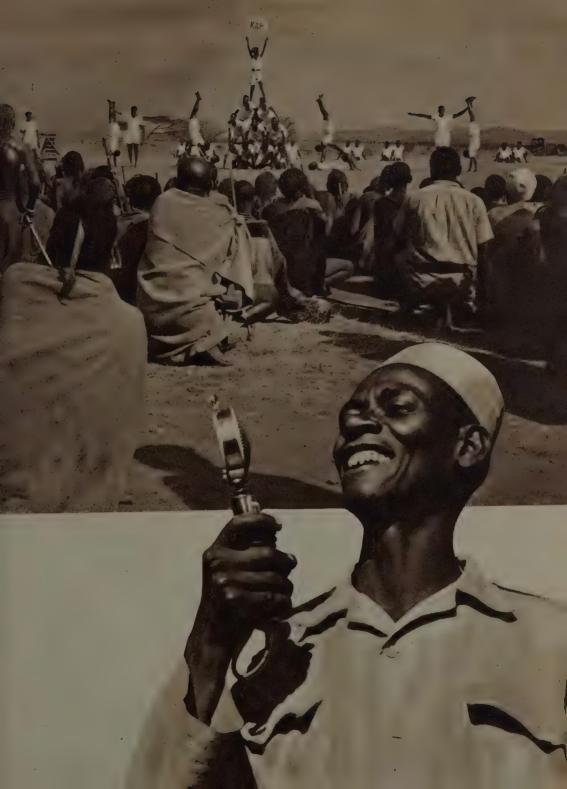
Robert Louis Stevenson would have it that it is better to travel hopefully than to arrive. To maintain the morale of our men and not to disappoint our audiences, we had to do both. We kept our appointments, crossing ferries, mountain-ranges and deserts, and in one instance, in Nyasaland, arrived to give our first show of a new tour only one hour later than the scheduled time—after a journey of a thousand



The raw recruit. "Kisarishu, our Masai—a bronze Adonis—retained the same dreamy dignity of some pagan Paladin and simplicity of heart as when he had first come to us"



The show begins: a display by Africans with an African announcer introducing the incidents to an audience of Africans. Among them, sometimes, were "lithe warriors, Athenian in the splendour of their physique and the classic poise of their spears and shields." Even these could admire the physical hardiness, courage and dexterity displayed in gymnastics by the Askari, who "carried one another about like monkeys and climbed up on one another like angels"





One item in the display was designed to show the development of the African soldier of this war, complete with Sten-gun and battledress, from the days of the tribal warrior. The latter appeared magnificently apparelled with war paint, spear and shield. To the more primitive peoples he was "no caricature of the past but a figure infinitely more real than the Askari of 1945: it was as though one were staging a historical pageant of the Battle of Hastings before the Anglo-Saxons themselves"









The old Askari and the new. Both the bearded veteran (Sergeant Kipturgat Tiongik) and the gay young warrior (Corporal Chesitike) come from the same tribe, the Hamitic Kipsigis of Kenya. The veteran's medals were earned in service with the King's African Rifles from 1908 to 1918



Bugler Boy Gabriel, a 12-year-old Musoga of Uganda, closes the display with a fanfare

miles from our base at Nairobi. We would arrive in the fierce glare of noon, our lorries laden with Askari, kit and exhibits, all covered with road-dust, without any fore-knowledge of where we should sleep or whether we should be greeted by tens or by thousands.

What should we show? One day the unit might be at Kota-Kota, beside Lake Nyasa, redolent of the old Slave Trade, showing to an audience of solidly Mohammedan Yaos; another day amongst plantation labour, barely emerging from their primitive tribal organization and suspecting evidence of witchcraft in our display; a little later, at the Jeanes School in Northern Rhodesia, before one of the most intelligent native audiences in Africa, where one of the students wrote subsequently of our show on "the necessity for Africans to sublimate their 'fear of the unknown' ": or at Mufulira, in the Copper Belt, with 15,000 native miners yelling approval as at a Cup Final: or with the Baila, where amongst the tribal elders there mingled Askari home on leave from Ceylon, proudly displaying the dentures that they had bought overseas at £5 a pair, to replace teeth that Baila custom removes from the upper jaw in puberty: or at Abercorn, where we gave our show on the same spot exactly twenty-five years later to the very day that von Lettow surrendered at the end of the East African campaign. If Africans only had come to our shows, the task of holding their attention would have been difficult enough. But when, from day to day, were added Governors, missionaries, Afrikaner miners, local settlers, Colonial Office representatives and even Army officers from Portuguese East Africa, the responsibility of evolving some common denominator of propaganda became very nearly overwhelming.

We made physical training the basis of our display for a variety of reasons. The demonstration of Bren guns and wireless receivingsets might astound our native audiences—but they were double-edged weapons from a propaganda point of view, filling some of the more thoughtful Africans with a sense of despair at the inadequacy of their own potential contribution to the war. mechanical devices were the fruits of European genius: but the physical hardiness, courage and dexterity displayed in gymnastics were something that our Askari themselves contributed, and for which they could be admired. "They carried one another about like monkeys and climbed up on one another like angels", wrote one native girl; while another likened their tumbling and vaulting to

"lightning flashes in a thunderstorm". Here was something, too, that Africans in schools and missions—where physical training is still known as 'drill'—could themselves emulate. Perhaps most important, it demonstrated—for those who had eyes to see—the essential relationship in our team of Africans between discipline and happiness.

Though we took infinite pains to explain in the vernacular over loudspeakers every item of our display, we learnt—frequently too late —how the psychology of each tribe required a different approach. It did not surprise us that the demonstration of mine-detection, with its mumbo-jumbo apparatus and infallible capacity for finding the hidden danger, should be thought to be some European form of witchcraft. Another item in our display was designed to show the development of the African soldier of this war, complete with Sten gun and battle-dress, from the days of the tribal warrior. The appearance of the latter, magnificently apparelled with warpaint, spear and shield, would be received with alarm by the women and children, and with paroxysms of delight by the more sophisticated elements in the audience. But among the more primitive peoples, in Kenya especially, who had themselves turned up with spears and shields, we had to take precautions that there should be no misunderstanding—for to them the tribal warrior was no caricature of the past but a figure infinitely more real than the Askari of 1945: it was as though one were staging a historical pageant of the battle of Hastings before the Anglo-Saxons themselves.

There was social etiquette also to be considered. In order to bring home the idea of Unarmed Combat, the Army form of all-in wrestling, we adopted the most modern musichall technique of carefully rehearsed 'interruptions' from the crowd: thus, so that the usefulness of a knowledge of self-defence might be apparent to all, we arranged that during the display a native 'girl' should suddenly meander across the arena, be molested by one of our Askari, and promptly throw him with a jiu-jitsu grip. Instead, however, of Virtue Triumphant being the lesson derived, we found in effect that native women were profoundly shocked by such conduct, holding that submissiveness was a far more decorous attitude in the circumstances.

Another difficulty was harder to overcome. Starting with the assumption that the root of the trouble was an insufficient realization amongst Africans that this was their war as well as ours, we set out to emphasize by every means possible the part being played by

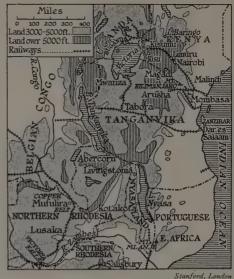
African troops in the war, and of the contribution that natives at home could make. By 1943 the tide had turned: the question everywhere was: "Where are the Europeans fighting?"—the idea having taken hold that the contribution of the Europeans (i.e. the British) was restricted to the supervision of African troops. Had Goebbels had an African section he could have made trouble here.

This was an instance where only the cinema could be of avail: to see a British pilot handling a Spitfire caused nothing like such a sensation as a British soldier, stripped to the waist, digging a trench: this, in Central Africa, was news. Such is the impression that the great majority of Africans have of their

trustees!

Explaining the progress of the war to those who had never seen a map (and this included some of our own Askari) called for a special technique of its own. We likened the contour of the North African coast to the outline of a bull that had to be seized—Cyrenaica the hump, Tripolitania the nape of the neck, Tunis and Bizerta the horns; and with these horns in our hands, we could toss the head and gore Europe in the belly. It was when we came to explain the progress of the Eighth and First Armies converging ever closer upon one another in Tunisia that one old Acholi chief, illiterate but with his chest sparkling with the medals of bygone campaigns with the King's African Rifles, shook his head wistfully and sighed: "Would that the Acholi were there to close the gap!"

But it was not in the formal displays we gave, still less in the technical impedimenta we demonstrated, that lay the value of our work. If a certain quality of life had come to be associated with the circus in Europe, then we would develop our own. We trained our Askari—no easy task—to go out in twos and threes on such spare days as we had, to lecture on the meaning of the war to some school, to demonstrate the treatment of wounds in the field to some village dispensary, to teach Army methods of physical training to a mission class. Very early on in the work it became clear that what counted was not what our Askari did or said during the afternoon's demonstration, but what they said round the camp-fire at night, as they answered the questions asked by Chiefs and villagers. Letter after letter-from schools and missions, Chiefs and Administrative Officers—contrasted the behaviour of our men with the conduct of some Askari on leave. "The Askari who showed these things were very good and gentle, because a person couldn't know that they were soldiers",



wrote one African clerk. It was in trying to bridge this gulf between soldier and civilian in showing that the Askari could be as disciplined in the Reserve as in the regiment, and in reminding the villager of his obligation to the soldier—that we probably made our most effective contribution.

From adversity we drew inspiration, and when our cinema apparatus broke down we persuaded our Askari to send home to their Chiefs for their tribal drums and spears, and to practise tribal dances: we taught the boy bugler to perform conjuring tricks: we rehearsed the unit in little plays and sketches to be given round the camp-fire. The light reflected from the village children's faces as they sat enthralled beside the fire: the elders pulling their skins or blankets a little closer as the night drew on: the sparks shooting upwards into the trees above: the cry of a jackal in some far-off village: the Askari singing the old Zulu choruses and marching songs of the King's African Rifles: our young sergeantmajor stepping into the middle of the circle to speak for a few minutes on the war, and the Chief gravely responding—all this, as Baden-Powell was the first to realize, left an impression that would be sensed long after any formal display had been forgotten.

Until the war no attempt had been made to bring cultural amenities within the reach of Africans in the country. Whilst the contribution of the Missions has been incalculable, it cannot be denied that in many instances in

the past they discouraged the African's sense of entertainment and fun, until it was either forgotten, driven underground, despised, or furtively sought sordid forms of expression. Our experience—and it is only fair to say that many Missions now, notably the Catholics, are finding this also—is that some adaptation of the old Shakespearean travelling companies, with 'uplift' powder in the jam, penny-whistle bands which villagers could themselves produce, even Morris dancing (which has been taken up with enthusiasm at one Mission in Northern Rhodesia) should all find their place in any campaign of Mass Education that sets out, not just to teach literacy, but to fill the cultural vacuum of life

in the African village. There were moments in those days when it seemed as though all East Africa might lie at our feet. "You will see by the accompanying sketch" (wrote Livingstone in 1851) "what an immense region God, in his Providence, has opened up.' I think we were capturing, however transitorily, something of that elation that seized the first explorers. In Northern Rhodesia we would pass, in the course of a few days, from villages where the reaction to our visit was best described by one lad's letter: "I wish I could have magical power to dig up my grandfather who used to boast 'we could drive these white people out of Northern Rhodesia in a day', for his saliva would dry up if he lived to see the armoured car"—to the Copper Belt, that most astonishing phenomenon in Africa today, where one emerges suddenly from hundreds of miles of arid bush into a brittle, harsh world of neon lighting, snack bars and luxury clubs. And in Kenya we would pass even within the course of a day from the Kipsigis-a race of lithe warriors, Athenian in the splendour of their physique and the classic poise of their spears and shields—to Kavirondo, where the Luo, with their coloured spectacles, straw hats and exuberant manners resemble more the nigger minstrels on the pier. One remembers any of a dozen shows in Nyasaland, the Union Jack floating in a cloudless sky against a background of Mlanje Mountain: missionaries, planters and Government officials mingling with the chiefs and the African crowds: the gasp of admiration as our Askari would march on through the trees, singing with all their might the song that was to be taken up by every school and Mission throughout the country, and looking-as one woman expressed it-"so bright and shining".

There was the native engine-driver at Mwanza, who stopped his whole train to rush down the embankment and see our show: and

at Tabora the prison superintendent who sent along the prisoners from the gaol on the grounds that they should carry the news to all the corners of Tanganyika on their release.

When such enthusiasm greeted our efforts, it was tempting to deceive ourselves as to the effectiveness of our work. It was salutary to re-read on safari Evelyn Waugh's brilliant satire on Abyssinia, Black Mischief, and to remind oneself how fantastically the motives and even the message of the best-meaning propagandist can be misinterpreted or twisted by a primitive people. Both in Uganda and in Nyasaland our work was impeded for a while by a rumour preceding us to the effect that we were European cannibals come to seek native bodies for sacrifice. When we discovered that our own young African sergeant-major, an educated Christian, admitted to the furtive but firm belief that there are European cannibals in East Africa, we learnt never to discount these superstitions and rumours in our work, and to accept the belief in witchcraft as universal, even in areas where European settlement, missionary enterprise and service in the King's African Rifles had obtained for nearly half a century. An Administrative Officer in Nyasaland wrote to us: "I was told at a meeting of Chiefs here that a rumour had gone round the District to the effect that your weapons would be fired at the crowd, partly to demonstrate their effect, and also because Government wanted to show their displeasure with the young men who had not joined the K.A.R.! This after some 40 years of benevolent administrationcan you beat it!" Pork-pie hats and witchcraft—the Old and the New Africa: it is when, as so often now, they go hand-in-hand that the educationist despairs.

Thus in contrast to the moments of elation it was often difficult, trundling across Africa day after day, not to abandon oneself to a defeatist cynicism. The rush to collect the cartridge-cases after the firing of our weapons was actuated more by their potential usefulness as snuff-containers than their souvenirvalue: a transient curiosity in anything novel might better describe the native reaction on more occasions than one liked to think, than an abiding interest in something of vital importance. Certainly there were days out in the blue when all that greeted us after a journey of anything up to a hundred miles over native tracks was a thin black line of a few scared old women and children, all the young men having taken to the bush for fear of conscription.

It was an African student in a higher form who wrote: "To talk to Africans about the



A cross-section of Central Africa watches, spellbound, a demonstration of mine-detection with the demonstrator blindfolded to show the audience that the mine is detected by ear and not by eye

war is like teaching a child to walk while he is two months old—the only thing which makes them understand war is shortage of goods." He went on to divide Africa into "the educated, who understand about the war", and the uneducated, who apparently do not. This was seldom our experience. With ignorance and fear—rarely displayed by the primitive tribes—we could deal. It was the supercilious cynicism of the Kikuyu, Wachagga and Baganda that constituted the problem. Government today in Africa wrestles not so much with incipient violence as with a lack of any warm loyalty: not so much with ignorance as with apathy; not so much with tribal superstition as with an increasing individual materialism. Nicolson has written somewhere that "we are suffering today from the penalty of semi-education, namely distrust", and how well the words apply to the 'progressive' tribes of Africa! It would be facile to explain this allpervading suspicion as lack of certainty in regard to Government's intentions (as, for example, in Kenya): it would, however, be much nearer the truth to attribute it to a reflection on the African's character—an inability to believe in any action as not being intentioned by self-interest.

The task of interpreting one's own people to another is never easy, as the British Council must know. But how much more complex when, as a foreigner oneself, one is charged with the endeavour of presenting, at their best, those of another race to their own people! The real fascination of the work lay not in doing propaganda to Africans, but in developing a body of propagandists—an educational 'Flying Squad'. They came to us from all units, from all tribes, from all stages of advancement, the majority of them proficient only in the work of their own branch of the Service, and all of them ignorant of the very idea of propaganda. It was our job to turn them into shock troops of mass education.

We were faced with peculiar, perhaps unique, difficulties. Discipline on safari was a problem in itself. In a battalion or depot there are all the sanctions hallowed by military tradition to enforce obedience to orders. But nothing known to the Manual of Military Lore can persuade a dour or recalcitrant soldier to show enthusiasm in the face of civilians, or to radiate goodwill, day after day, in temperatures well over 100°, before tens of thousands of strangers. If any chose to sulk or otherwise resent his treatment, he could easily sabotage the whole propaganda effect

of our work. We were therefore, in a very special sense, the prisoners of our own men. We were constantly being reminded how sensitive a plant is the loyalty of the educated African, how sympathetically it has to be tended if it is to flower—how swiftly it can be

killed by a word.

To inculcate an understanding of the work in our men—some of them themselves illiterate and barely emerged from the Bush-we had to present the whole conception of mass education as an adventure. So that they might explain on safari the necessity for Africans to sell their cattle to Government in war-time, we sent them to Liebig's Kenva factory, where, amongst other things, the Mohammedan members of our team could convince themselves that all Army tinned beef was slaughtered according to Islamic custom. During our safari in Kenya, to take but one example, our Askari were shown over the gold mines at Kisii, the soda lake and works at Magadi, leather factory at Limuru, marine workshops at Kisumu, dried vegetable factories, sisal estates, and model farms in the White Highlands. They bathed in the surf

at Malindi, saw the ruins at Gedi not far away, shot crocodiles on Lake Baringo, flew with the R.A.F. at Nairobi and boarded submarines at Mombasa: they met Senior Administrative Officers, Chiefs, and thousands of people of different tribes throughout the Territory. One has only to quote the exclamations of some of the men, as they stood for the first time at the Victoria Falls, gazing through the perpetual rainbow in the mist suspended above the abyss, to realize what such an experience could mean for the simplest African: "So there is a God," said an old Moslem Yao Askari, "Now will you believe me when I say the rainbow does not end in a hole!" cried our young Education Corps instructor: and our sergeant-major, as the writer concluded a little harangue on Livingstone, at the foot of the famous memorial overlooking the Falls, spontaneously gave the order "Eyes Right!" in tribute to the statue.

It became clear that our men were moulded not so much by any training we gave them as by the work itself. Lord Elton has written in St. George and the Dragon: "The crusades demanded of those who undertook them not so



The significance of the Royal Navy's work is expounded to Africans, many of whom had never seen the sea, by Petty Officer Ramazan Hasan of Zanzibar. Though illiterate, he speaks seven languages

much a certain quality of life in the past, as a progressive effort of self-discipline in the present. It was not so much the crusaders who made the crusade, as the crusade which made the crusaders." To make a Knight of the Askari—to cure the trousered African of his contempt for the naked savage—only the

experience of safari could do. Who were these Askari—of whom one African wrote, "more brilliant and more polite people I have never met or talked with"? There was Petty Officer Ramazan Hasan, of Zanzibar, lent to us by the Navy. A brilliant linguist but illiterate, a spinner of tales with all the ingratiating flattery of the Coastal Swahili, yet with a deepest loyalty to the Royal Navy, Ramazan was obsequious to Chiefs, respectful to Europeans, genial towards the simple pagan, with an intuitive appreciation of what propaganda meant. When Afrikaner miners in the Copper Belt passed derogatory remarks in his hearing to the effect of "What, niggers in the Navy!", Ramazan would astound and shame them by courteously inquiring in Afrikaans whether they had spent an instructive afternoon. "He'd be worth two District Officers to me," said a Tanganyika D.C. as he watched Ramazan holding spellbound, with his talk on their debt to the Navy, a crowd of two hundred Africans who had never seen the sea. Our only Somali was Mohamed, who valiantly swallowed his racial exclusiveness and religious intolerance in his determination to honour his promise to share fully in the life and work of our infidel Bantu, and was only rarely scandalized or goaded by some incident with pig's meat. We remember Sergeant Alec, of Livingstonia in Nyasaland, with his fervour as a teacher, his friendship for the European, his virility and agility as a gymnast, his discipline as a soldier, and his magnificent singing of Zulu songs-in himself the finest refutation of all the well-worn criticisms directed against missionary educa-There was Ruithanga, a Kikuyu, enshrining in a youthful heart all the old traditional knowledge and lore of the tribal Elders. And there was Kisarishu, our Masai —a bronze Adonis, as brilliantly versatile as he was aloof in spirit, who had shaken hands with Governors and Generals and received the tributes of some hundreds of thousands of Africans, and yet retained the same dreamy dignity of some pagan Paladin and simplicity of heart as when he had first come to us from Arusha in Tanganyika. He and I together started the work described in this article. Within four years of military service, he has risen from a primitive pastoral background to become a qualified Physical Training Instructor, Drill Sergeant, Mortar-Detachment Commander, Unit Storeman, and an outstanding wrestler. He has learned to read, write and speak English and travelled 30,000 miles throughout East and Central Africa.

The war brought these men together, uniting them and us in the pursuit of a common object, sharing the vicissitudes of journeys that took us from the slopes of Kilimanjaro to the banks of the Zambesi, from Lake Nyasa to the shores of the Indian Ocean, and rendering us oblivious to the colour of one another's skins. Small wonder that we felt, then, a pride in such an élite of men, or a regret that, in the conditions prevailing now that the war is ended, any attempt to recreate that unity would find us ranged on the side of Govern-

ment—and them for themselves.

It is easy now in retrospect to realize all the factors that favoured us, the lack of which would make so difficult—if not impossible the adaptation of our work for peace-time objects. Probably only the Army (and then in war-time) could afford the expense of maintaining such a unit. Before ever we started a safari, nearly a hundred different branches of the Service cooperated to provide us with the very best in men, training and equipment. To glamorize war to the African native is not difficult—with flags and bands and all the attractive novelties of uniform and pay: to popularize the mundane tasks of deeper pit latrines and tsetse clearance year after year is a very different matter. For the maintenance of discipline and morale among our men we relied, on the one hand, on military discipline, and on the other hand on the constant stimulus of some new adventure, some new Governor or General to visit us: no such incentives to overcome the natural inertia of the African would be at hand in peace-time. The impact of our work, moreover, on Africans—and especially on educated Africans—was all the greater in that we were not an official part of their routine Government machinery, but came from something bigger and beyond—the Army.

One lesson, however, emerges clearly from our experience: there can be no evangelism without evangelists, and if Mass Education is to make headway in primitive societies, we need our shock troops, drawn from a much wider circle than the senior forms of existing schools, and with their training emphasizing objectives other than employment on clerical duties in Government offices. "What can I do? I'm one against 60,000!" said the D.C.

in an up-country station.

### Trek's End

#### by ANTHONY DELIUS

What effect have his war experiences had on the returning soldier and what changes, resulting from the war, will he encounter in his homeland? The answer given by Mr Macartney in our February number, as regards Australia, affords an instructive comparison to that given in the following article by Mr Delius, who served with the Union Defence Force Intelligence Corps and made the 'Great Trek North' with his compatriots. He has now returned to, and writes as a journalist from, South Africa

About the middle of 1940 when South African troops were taking up their positions on the uneasy Kenya border, Smuts coined a phrase, "The Great Trek North", to describe the Union's military effort. It was a good phrase, not only because it gave an emotional flashback to a central and heroic episode in South African history, the Great Trek by the border Boers which like the American movement West opened up the country for the Europeans, but also because it gave the impression of a broad sweep forward into a perilous but promising future. The phrase haunted the war effort. There was in it a vague spaciousness and a true Smutsian tang of high endeavour which made the other side of the years of struggle seem to hold a promised land for the body and spirit, just as the blue horizon beyond the muddy bosom of the Orange River had long before seemed to conceal that Israel of the trekking Boers, green spreading pastures flowing with coffee and cattle and free from all interference. Today, with their trek ended, soldiers are returning to the Union wondering how much of the vision splendid will have to be dismantled.

When the war broke out definitions of democracy were scarce and the Utopias had not yet emerged. For the most part men volunteered with their main political conclusions summed up in the current recruiting slogan, "If South Africa is worth living in, it's worth fighting for!" There was a story of an octogenarian Boer War veteran being turned away from the recruiting booth and shouting angrily, "What! Me too old? Just give me a gun and show me an Englishman!" Most of South Africa's 2½ million whites had more precise information as to the sides in the quarrel, however, and not a few of the 8 million blacks knew that the English and the Germans were at one another's throats again. Only a handful of South Africans saw the deeper significance of the clash though many felt it vaguely. To most Union Nationals even the great local problems of race, erosion and industrial revolution were only diffusedly apparent like shapes in a swamp-mist.

Returning soldiers now find that, though great development has gone on in the Union during their six-year absence from civilian life, the fundamental problems have grown ominously clear and defined. Most of them knew when they went away that their national environment was complex. They were aware that there was in it every shade of skin from black to white, every state of civilized men from bushmen to scientists, the complete range of riches from the Rand millionaire to the shanty-dweller on the Cape Flats and each variation of climate and country from Knysna Forest to Kalahari Desert. Under the veld, everybody knew, lay immense mineral wealth, but it was also known that he who would get anything of either a mineral or vegetable nature out of the earth must be prepared to spend a great deal of money. Trees grew faster and coal was cheaper than anywhere else in the world but their transport to suitable markets had to be done over great distances. A vicious cycle of drought and flood brought periodic ruin and starvation, while urban expansion was hampered by a chronic shortage of water. Finally there were two official languages, three capitals and two great political groups, Europeans who had the vote and non-Europeans who had not.

#### THE LIVING PAST

History is more apparently active in South African affairs than it is in those of most other countries. Memories of Zulu treachery and Kaffir wars still operate against the progress of the non-European and the still-sputtering emotions of the Boer War partly serve to hold the two European races apart. Even in attitudes to this war traces of history could be found. If one thought of South African history as the British occupation in 1795, the 1820 settlers, the struggle for responsible government at the Cape, Cecil Rhodes, the discovery of gold and diamonds, the Boer War, Union and the achievement of Dominion Status, one was automatically pro-war. If history was the struggle against the febrile

Dutch East India Company from 1700 onwards, the great movement from a frontier ruined by vacillating British policy into the interior in 1836, the tragic endeavour to maintain the small republics in the veld culminating in the Second War for Freedom of 1900, the rebellion of 1915 and finally the downfall of General Smuts in 1924 and the fifteen-year Premiership of General Hertzog, one was automatically anti-war because anti-English. Among the non-European intellectuals South African history was seen more as the ruthless extermination of Bushmen and Hottentots by advancing whites, the tragic wars of the Zulu King Chaka which threw the Bantu world into a flurry of blood and wiped out two million people, and thereafter the painful breakdown of tribal life under the guns and economy of the Europeans. English supremacy seemed to them less irksome than a return of Germany to Africa, however, for the treatment of the Hereros in South-West was not forgotten. Then there is a small but significant band of Europeans and non-Europeans under the not entirely popular intellectual leadership of Mr J. H. Hofmeyr who regard Dominion Status as a starting-point for a greater South Africa.

#### THE GREAT TREK NORTH

The taking of the Africa Oath was the symbolic starting-point of the military career of most young South Africans. Those most infected with the holiday mood in which operations in Africa were begun were the troops who went north by the overland route, travelling by train and truck. The first part of the journey lay through parts of the Rhodesias to the Union Defence Force Transport Depot at Broken Hill near the Copper Belt. Thence they followed the Great North Road, skirting the Congo, driving through Nyasaland and Tanganyika and arriving finally at Nairobi. All the way up bank clerks from Johannesburg and farmers from the Karroo kept their eyes roving over monotonously passing Africa in search of rhinos, giraffes, lions, zebras and wildebeeste. They noted with pride that the Bantu of the Union were on the whole superior in physique and appearance to the black men they saw about them. They were outraged to find that as the heat grew greater and greater the price of beer rose by a tickey per pint per day. It was a fabulous journey, despite the quinine and the Anopheles gambii. At the end of it was Kilimanjaro practically on the equator—and with snow on its peak.

In the Union murmuring concerning a Pan-African policy began to be heard. As

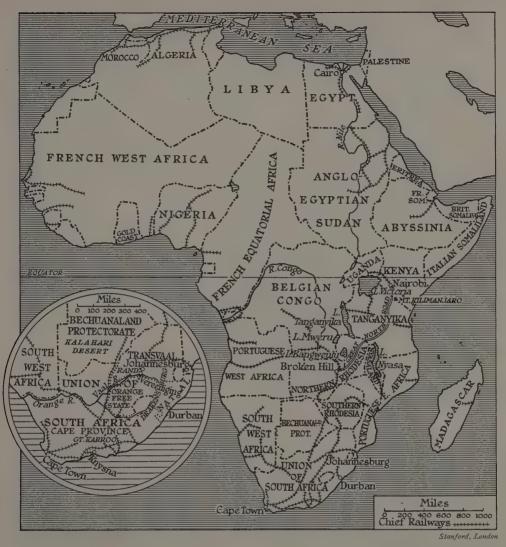
representatives of the most 'civilized' State in Africa, Union troops took a sort of bigbrotherly interest in their less developed neighbours. Men got about as much as they could and examined the flora, fauna and people of these new parts, comparing the agricultural training of the Bantu with efforts of a similar nature going on back home. Farmers stopped for odd moments during those hectic advances in Abyssinia to stare in astonishment at local maize crops. Crashed pilots, trudging warily through the bush carrying the chit, "Don't mutilate this man. He is an Ally", or eating twenty-four boiled bad eggs urged upon them by a semisavage host, gained an even more intimate knowledge of Africa.

#### RACIAL REFLECTIONS

Other parties of South Africans remained in contact for fair periods with the peoples and problems of the Rhodesias, the Congo, Kenya, West Africa and Abyssinia. Throughout the war thousands of U.D.F. personnel travelled up and down the South African Air Force route across the Rhodesias, the Bangweulu Swamps, the Great Lakes, Uganda, the Sudan and down the Nile to Cairo.

The South Africans got their first mild racial shock when they found that their comrades-in-arms in Kenya were the black troops of West African regiments and the King's African Rifles. Union Bantu and coloured men were given no better weapon than an assegai. How could one teach a native to handle a rifle when the rifles behind forts and ringed waggons had saved the white race so often in South Africa's past? Thus to the end European troops exposed themselves to the brunt of the fighting while non-Europeans drove trucks, carried stretchers. did pioneer work for the Engineers and loaded 25-pounders. White troops admired the work of the riflemen and the negroes in Somaliland and Abyssinia and even admitted that the Union's blacks and coloureds could do likewise if given the chance. Only one couldn't give them the chance "because things are different where we come from".

Later, in Egypt, attacks upon South African colour-consciousness became more solid. Cairo itself was a standing affront to men who held that black and white did not mix socially. Sometimes the racial taboos of British, Free French, New Zealand and even Australian soldiers were so lax as to permit them to be seen drinking in sozzled brotherly love with Union non-European troops in bars frequented by white members of the First and Second Divisions. Then there was

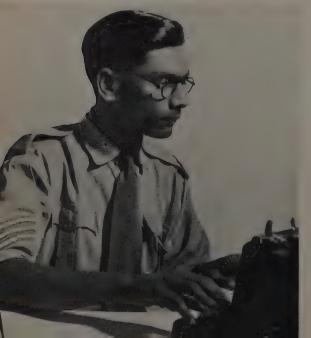


the shock of the Indians with their coloured officers. Later in Italy came negro troops, negro fighter-pilots and negro officers from the U.S.A. In quiet the white U.D.F. soldier reflected on these sights a great deal, although he hid his conclusions behind the story of the Cape Coloured artilleryman who, upon being greeted by an American negro, "Hiya, savage! Where's yo assegai?", retorted hotly, "Yesus! En youse sich a black bastard yourself!"

In Egypt, ringed round by such a bewildering array of allied nations, what little racial feeling there had been between Afrikaner and Briton in the ranks of the U.D.F. faded altogether before a more general feeling of being South African. Gradually there grew up, in common with the rest of the forces in the desert, an enduring admiration for the solid fighting qualities of the 'Pommy'—less flashy qualities, perhaps, than those of comrades from the Commonwealth but recognized as the basis of the British war effort. A deeper and more realistic appreciation of the Commonwealth itself grew from the inclusion of South African infantry and engineers in that originally all-Commonwealth force, the Eighth Army. Later, when the 6th S.A.



The spearhead of South Africa's war effort was the soldier of European descent. Volunteers to a man, some 223,000 out of a white population of 2½ millions enlisted for the campaigns that took them to the northern extremity of Africa and even across the Mediterranean into Italy. Whether their mother tongue was Afrikaans or English, the men of the Union Defence Force fought as South Africans and their common experience engendered unity. It would be hard to pick Briton from Afrikaner among this group of trainees: in fact, they are mostly Afrikaners



Other South Africans made important, if less direct contributions to the defeat of Mussolini's African Empire and the Afrika Korps; among them the Asiatic community, numbering 220,000. Many essential military jobs were capably handled by men of the Indian and Malay Corps. The Indian orderly here shown, in peace time a clerk in a Durban shipping firm, brought efficient business training to the work of an adjutant's office

South African Official Photograph



South African Official Photogra

(Above) Bantu Red Cross pupils learn the correct way to dress head injuries. The  $6\frac{1}{2}$  million Bantus in the Union were not enlisted as combatants; but as non-combatants—for example stretcher-bearers—they did invaluable service. (Below) Other auxiliary services were manned by the coloured population of nearly a million; volatile, quick-witted folk of very mixed blood who can play nearly anything that will make a tune



Armoured Division renewed the major South African contact with the Eighth Army in Italy, that Army had developed a completely international character—and perhaps there

was a lesson in that too.

The impression made upon the minds of Bantu and coloured troops by Egypt and the Middle East is almost impossible to gauge. There is no doubt that it must have been far more vivid and less sophisticated than that made upon the Europeans. The quick watchful Cape Coloured was always a difficult customer for the wily Egyptian, and, although the slower Bantu was at first fair game, the pedlars of Araby began to fight shy of them after a while. The scene, recently witnessed by a Durban citizen, of an engaging black man trying to sell two Americans the skin of a Zululand goat as the hide of a bear, assegaied in the Drakensberg, shows that some of the lessons learnt in Egypt have already reached home. There is no doubt that the Bantu gained a more intimate knowledge than the average Allied soldier of life in the Middle East; firstly because his astonishing gift of tongues enabled him to pick up the languages of new contacts within a month or two, and secondly because he had fewer bars of racial prejudice to prevent him from going where he liked. Nor was the coloured man who had learned to laugh and sing in District Six appalled into listless silence by the desert or the slums of Cairo. But until a non-European records these experiences it will be hard to judge their effect.

Other, more superficial but hardly less important experiences were undergone by South Africans. In Abyssinia, for instance, there was the slightly dubious experience of seeing the 'wogs' flattening out traces of progress brought by the Italians. Later one heard that mutilation had been restored as a punishment in this the first country liberated from Fascist oppression. Soldiers saw the neat civic centres and farming projects of the Italians along the African fringe of the Mediterranean. Parties of uniformed farmers went to Palestine during periods of leave and toured the communal farms. South African Engineers working on the vital railway line to Russia through fantastic and difficult country in Persia learnt as much as they laboured. In Italy there was every possible aspect of civilization, from bombed-out squalor to Old Masters, from new to ancient ruins, at which the soldiers of a raw young State at the other end of Africa could stare. People back in the Union began to hear of a craze for opera sweeping the ranks and at least one new Afrikaans word was added to the colloquial

vocabulary, pikkolotjie (little piccolo). Artistic horizons widened beyond the morning view of the yellow mine-dumps, the Post Office in Cape Town, and the Union Buildings; the olive trees of Tuscany made the boasted spaces of the yeld seem a little uncomfortably naked.

#### MECHANIZATION FOR PEACE

There was one character that people once claimed distinguished this from all other wars, namely its mechanization, which will benefit post-war South Africa. Not only did South Africa herself have to step up her productiveness to meet new demands for engines of war but her soldiers gained an extensive knowledge of the application of machinery to human The new learning did not, of course, stop short at driving different types of transport and flying planes. Soldiers saw how primitive conditions could be combated by a combination such as that of the Jeep, the Bulldozer, the Bailey Bridge and the Dakota. Handling and servicing some of the most advanced machinery in the world became a daily experience for thousands of South To an artisan-starved country more than any other in need of machinery and science to develop its agriculture and tap its mineral resources, these young men will be a tremendous boon. Research into problems of development has already begun under Brigadier (Dr) Schonland of Radar fame.

Throughout the later stages of the war all these lessons and impressions were being pointed and emphasized by that indefatigable body, the Army Education Service. Gathered together under Colonel E. G. Malherbe (now Master of Natal University College and probably the greatest authority on education in the Union), a band of university lecturers, lawyers, school teachers, journalists and farmers laboured as Information Officers to give South Africans a greater understanding of the deep-rooted causes and possible implications of the war. They also attempted to divert some of the energies of national assertiveness into a sober consideration of the Union's imposing social and economic problems. A measure of their success is in the fact that enough returning soldiers are contributing towards a Native Health Service as a memorial to fallen comrades to make it a feasible proposition. What results this continuous dissemination of information will have in post-war South Africa nobody can guess.

But the situation in the Union to which the soldiers are returning has also undergone qualitative changes. The Government, largely to offset the South-Africa-First!-Why waste-our-blood-to-save-England's-Empire

propaganda of the Opposition, sought a wider basis of national appeal. It hammered away on the stupidity of racialism while Smuts talked Pan-Africa and the Wider Commonwealth. It began to be emphasized that South Africa's population was not 2\frac{1}{2} million whites but 10 million black, white and coloured people who could only progress or retrogress together. One by one the major problems of the Union—failing labour resources due to health deterioration and lack of education among the non-Europeans, soil erosion and wrong cropping, a one-basket economy of goldmining—emerged like spectres from their official pigeon-holes to counter the racial bogeys let loose by the Nationalists, Ossewabrandwag and New Orderites. Underlining all came the excellent though shattering reports of the Social and Economic Planning Council. They showed that, despite mealies, sugar, citrus, wool, diamonds, gold, chromium, coal and manganese, the Union's income per capita still worked out to less than Egypt's. These facts were riposted home by such lively new publications as Trek and Libertas, followed for a little while and somewhat at a distance by the gold-controlled daily press.

#### A BATTLE OF INTERESTS

Behind the great façade of Smuts, the political critics tell us, a silent struggle for future dominance has been going on between the growing secondary industries and the gold interests. Dr H. J. van der Byl, as Director of Supplies, harnessed the mounting momentum of Union industry to war production and turned South Africa into the 'workshop of the Middle East'. This comparatively immense effort has left the Union with an industrial instrument which can only be fully used if the factories can rely upon stable urban populations of black workers. If the Union's labour policy is changed to meet this requirement, non-European wage-levels will rise because competition for labour will increase with an expanding internal market and because the Bantu workers will become more organized. The bulk of black workers on farms and mines today are supposedly compensated for low wages by the fact that each has a plot in a Reserve for the sustenence of his family and to which he can return. This is the "migratory labour system" which is being damned by a growing body of white socialists as ruinous to all Bantu social life. It supplies the cheap labour which helps to make a paying proposition of the extremely expensive business of pulling gold out of the earth up shafts sometimes as much as five miles deep.

The ubiquitously powerful Gold Producers' Committee has pointed out that if wages go up there will be a corresponding decrease in gold output—and without the great returns from her main export what is South Africa to use in paying for her post-war social schemes and other projects? The peckings of fledgeling industries? To which the industrialists retort, And what is going to happen when the gold milch-cow runs dry, as in course of time it must?

There is evidence that today some sort of compromise or agreement to differ has been reached between these two interests. Great new steel plants are going up beside the Vaal and rumours are growing daily stronger that vast goldfields lie beneath the blank spaces of the Orange Free State. Whatever has been decided, however, the tension between the two interests will remain the chief potential split in the Union's economic character, underlying all the other criss-crossing fractures in the population. Realization of this can be heard in the undertones of all political speeches, from the lucid and heroic expositions of the Bantu case by Mrs Ballenger, one of the three legislative representatives of the black population, to the booming oratory of Dr Malan, leader of the Nationalists.

Returning to this, the ex-volunteer finds himself bewildered by evidence of great wealth and threats of disaster. His welcoming homeland has about double the wealth she had when he went off to the wars. The number of new business enterprises being gazetted is staggering. He himself is being most considerately treated by slow but sincere demobilization authorities who have in their plans everything from university courses for ex-soldiers to sheltered employment for the disabled. Art has been booming and children's art centres are springing up throughout the country. Theatre, ballet and opera are being given every encouragement by the public to continue their war-time flowering, some even going so far as to talk of a National Theatre. Radio shows a desire to improve and expand. The community centre in the former social desert of Fordsburg, a mining suburb of Johannesburg, is fraught with possibilities. Gradually consciousness of the responsibilities of Europeans as trustees for non-European progress is widening under the cool insistence of such bodies as the Race Relations Institute and the Friends of Africa. Suggestions for founding an Africa Bureau on the Rand are in the air. Yet, anxious as he is to see all this promise fulfilled, the man returning to Civvy Street hears warnings of impending disaster.



Liberta



South Africa is famous for her beauty and wealth; less known are the social and economic problems which her returning soldiers will have to tackle. Foremost is that of raising the non-European's level as producer and consumer. (Above) The Klip Cooling Towers at Vereeniging form a background typifying the war-expanded secondary industries that must find a better source of food for their workers than the primitive agriculture shown in the foreground, using methods still too common in the Union. Ex-soldiers are being recruited to carry out government plans for training backward Bantu farmers. Somehow the black and coloured people must be fitted to participate in, and benefit from, scientific agriculture and industry. About 500,000 of them (with one-tenth as many whites) work on the Rand mines producing gold—'the fly-wheel of South African economy'. Among these now moves the returned non-European ex-soldier, bring the fruits of disquieting experience from the slums of Cairo to (left) District Six of Capetown, home of the coloured people whose racial inheritance includes Bantu, Hottentot, Malay, Indian and European elements



(Above) Erosion has already robbed the Union of a quarter of its topsoil; the causes are drought, flood, bad farming, donkeys, goats and, in some areas, too many cattle. Soil conservation is therefore an urgent necessity and the appropriate scrvices will absorb numbers of ex-soldiers. Water conservation is also a vital necessity in a land where 90 per cent of the rainfall is lost through evaporation. Dams, such as that on the Vaal River shown below, will provide opportunities for returned soldiers on irrigation farming schemes



Perhaps the soldier becomes really aware of trouble when he has to choose between joining one of two ex-Serviceman's organizations. These are the Springbok Legion, a leftist body of considerable dynamism, and the British Empire Service League, a less vociferous group with a greater air of respectability. These two bodies have been at loggerheads over the question of political action and now seem to have broken off negotiations for unity until a dim date in the future. The Springbok Legion and the Nationalists have clashed in the streets of Johannesburg and both sides have proclaimed a splendid victory. More ominous than these upper political divisions is the widespread unrest of the non-Europeans. The Indians are demanding the vote and politicians in India are bringing moral and political pressure to bear in favour of these expatriates. Smuts is in the uncomfortable position of having either to lose face with the English in England or lose the votes of the English in Natal. The coloured people are protesting against their affairs being segregated from those of the whites by the institution of a Coloured Advisory Council. The Bantu is in the throes of changing his whole social structure from a tribal and pastoral one to one fitted to a new age of scientific agriculture and industry. At the moment the Bantu people have not enough land, housing or political power to accomplish this change without considerable suffering. Symptomatic of all this is the present crime wave in the country with its peak figure of sixty murders in one month on the Rand.

#### SO MUCH TO DO

There are many additional irritants. First of all the returning soldier has his personal life disrupted by a shortage of 250,000 houses in the country. Health statistics reveal shocking advances by tuberculosis and syphilis and a crying need for better hospitalization and feeding. Twenty-five per cent of the Union's soil has eroded away and another 50 per cent threatens to go within a comparatively short period, unless anti-erosion measures are stepped up. To complicate matters a most untimely and disastrous drought has ruined the country's maize crop, the basic food of the livestock and the Bantu population of the Union. Meanwhile the country is covered with a rash of pontificating experts, and commissions are to be found behind every bush and donga.

Thus although the soldier has returned with a taste for action and with the issues more clearly defined, it is a little hard to know where to start. Round about him are the

voung Afrikaner Nationalists and the non-European youths just as dissatisfied and groping. The young Nationalist wearied at length of secret drilling and coup-d'état-planning for a great day that never came. His propagandists, clutching at any straw to keep his mind from the world adventure he was missing, tried to fabricate martyrs. wrestler called van der Walt-known as the 'Masked Marvel'-was shot while evading arrest on charges of subversive activity and a sustained effort was made to put him up beside the great heroes of the Boer War—and so on. But there is reason for suspecting that the young Nationalist is growing tired of the 'wilderness' in spite of the ready-made jobs offered to him by growing 'true' Afrikaner concerns, the braaivleis-aands (roast meat picnics) and the endless exhortations to hold fast to the Republic. He is however still very hysterical about 'the Kaffirs', the black peril. The spreading malease of the non-European youth is for him an ominous sign that White Supremacy is threatened. The non-European, far more politically conscious than his father, has naturally not so much respect for White Supremacy. He is avid for education, less awed by tribal authority than formerly, resentful of pass-laws and other discrimination. Moving about amongst the coloured and black youths is the returned non-European soldier telling tales of other countries where Umlungu (the white man) was not so aloof.

Such is the prospect at Trek's end. South Africa has a great future, as General Smuts insists with suspicious vehemence, and the young European soldier has a key position in that future. He has seen South Africa in continental perspective and he has a working knowledge of the modern context. Whether he be of English or Afrikaans descent he knows much of the diplomacy of composing racial differences. The Union is now entering a period when the population must come together as a whole or lose its economic heritage in a chaos of hair-splitting, racial bombast and devil-take-the-hindmost enterprises. Our problems admit only of national solutions in which white, coloured and black play whole-hearted and personal rôles. The link for this new unity is the returned soldier. In our most trying period he will be looked to by the non-European because he once fought for democracy and by the extremist Afrikaner because he is a white man. For the sake of peace, progress and existence he had better be prepared to play this double rôle as never

before.



From Blaeus Atlas

The Moluccas in 1664

By courtesy of the Royal Geographical Society

# From Europe to the Spice Islands

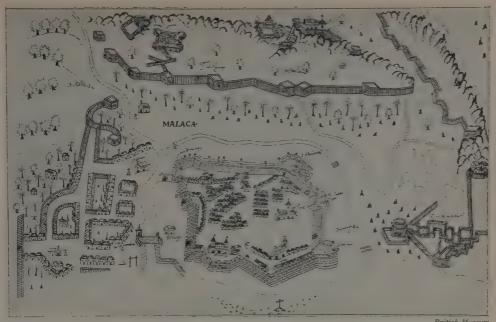
by GUY ROBERTS

Mr Roberts' articles in our two previous numbers showed how and when Indians, Arabs and Chinese made their respective contributions to the population and culture of the East Indies. His present article explains the origin, nature and importance of European influence there and outlines some effects of Western methods when applied in this region. A final article will attempt to assess what the convergent influences imply in relation to British responsibilities in South-East Asia

The first European ships to reach Far Eastern waters were three Portuguese men-of-war which appeared off Malacca in 1509. They were, however, forced to turn back to India by the local Sultan who had a small fighting fleet and the support of Indian and Arab merchants. At that time the Portuguese had no material superiority over the Malays but they were very largely in control of Indian Ocean seaways, interrupting that stream of

trade which at the end of medieval times set out from the Indies towards the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. Hence the Portuguese withdrawal from the Straits was only temporary. By 1511 they had returned, captured Malacca and made it the focus of their trading with the Spice Islands.

From then on the East Indies became part of an entirely new pattern. Instead of being marginal to influences from India and China,



British Museum

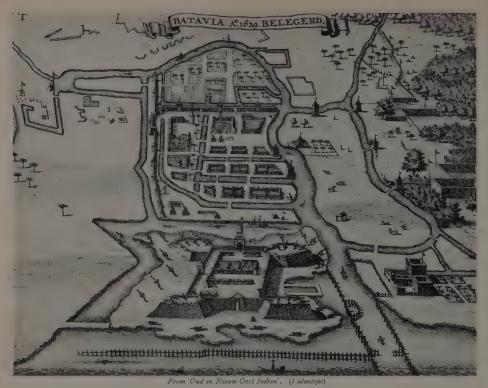
Malacca fortress as depicted in 1646 by Pedro Barretto de Resende in an historical and topographical account of the Portuguese settlement in the East Indies

they became marginal to two zones of European influence. Portugal came to the Indian Ocean with a papal right to monopolize discoveries in half the world east of the Tordesillas Line, which ran longitudinally through the mid-Atlantic. The Spanish discoverers had a similar right west of the Line: on its basis they pressed across the Pacific from the Americas and settled in the Philippines. At this time the maps of East Asia were mythical rather than factual, raising a political question: In which of these hemispheres did the Spice Islands belong? This was an acute issue because, though the Portuguese had established themselves in Malacca, they were more interested in the Moluccas, a group of islands east of Celebes, where alone were found the cloves which Europeans valued so highly. Portugal came off best in this dispute and was left with proprietorial rights in the Moluccas even though these were further east than the Spanish Philippines. The Portuguese monopoly lasted barely 150 years, yet the pattern of Portuguese and Spanish interests converging in the East Indies curiously foreshadowed the modern pattern in which Pacific Ocean power, based on America and with an outlier in the Philippines, converges on the British sphere

of influence round the Indian Ocean.

Because the Portuguese were not really discovering the Indian Ocean but displacing a trading monopoly which had been maintained by Indian and Arab merchantmen, they approached the Spice Islands from their trading centres in India and by way of the Straits of Malacca. In course of time, since the islands which grew the spices were well to the east, the Portuguese established another trading centre for themselves at Macassar, the southernmost tip of Celebes, which was not far from the Moluccas and a convenient point for setting out on the trans-Pacific route to Cape Horn, a route specially favoured by the natural wind systems of the Southern Hemisphere.

The approach of the Dutch to the Indies was different from that of the Portuguese in pattern though identical with it in object. They came into the spice trade partly because of the decline of Portuguese influence as the result of events in the Iberian Peninsula, partly because the spices were needed medicinally by people of Central and Northern Europe to counteract the deficiencies of their winter diet. This market could most easily be reached from Holland through the North German Plain. Taking advantage of the fact



Batavia, the famous trading post which the Dutch built for themselves in Java, had not been founded many years when the drawing here shown was made in 1629



A lively 16th-century scene in the Dutch East Indies trading station or 'factory' in Bantam on the Sunda Strait. Spices are being brought in and weighed while Javanese sitting under the porch are getting their accounts made up on a slate

that the Spice Islands were far on the fringe of Portuguese influence, and of the greater knowledge of Indian Ocean wind systems, Dutch merchantmen approached the Indies from a new direction. They rounded the Cape and set before the Westerlies, sailing due east for a hundred days and then due north, following the anti-clockwise air-currents of the South Indian Ocean. By this means they came to the Sunda Strait, the one gap in the 1500-mile wall which the coasts of Sumatra and Java present to all who come from the west or the south. It was not far from the Sunda Strait that the Dutch established their main trading post, at Batavia in Java. So long as routes through the Malacca Strait were disputed by rival traders, the Dutch also left the Indies by the Sunda Strait, sailing with the Trade Winds to the East African coast, then south to tack round the Cape and on to Europe.

For a while British merchantmen shadowed the Dutch in their dealings with the Spice Islands, but for the most part British traders concentrated on India and only resumed interest in the Indies towards the end of the 18th century when, like the Portuguese, they travelled east from India, so that they too approached the Archipelago by way of the Malacca Strait, a route which became the only rational one when the Suez Canal opened, eliminating the Cape route and reviving the old routes from the Middle East to the Indies.

With the coming of Europeans to the 'Empire of the Islands', as modern Indonesians like to call it, economic factors

assumed a significance different from that of the period of Indian colonization and Chinese merchant venturers, and foreign to the tradition of the indigenous people who, while satisfying their daily needs from local resources, were not able to build up from them that type of power which became characteristic of Europe during the four centuries it had contact with the Archipelago. The Indian and Chinese merchants had had little interest in the Indonesian agricultural produce because this differed scarcely at all from what India and China produced for themselves. European merchants, however, came to South-East Asia as much for local agricultural specialities as for taking part in the India-This latter became most China trade. prominent only in the most recent phases, but the Dutch had established a trading



One of the great Dutch pioneers in Java (1617–1629)

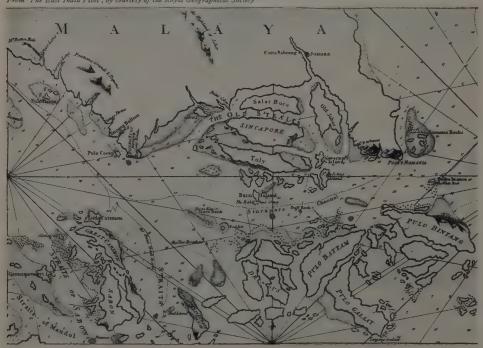
station in South China and Japan by 1610. Commander Perry's action in re-opening Japan in the second half of the 19th century has been over-dramatized and the early trading relations of the Dutch with Japan lost sight of.

The European trade in spices depended upon a branch of Indonesian farming which had negligible local importance. Spices had a high value when they reached Europe after the risks of the prolonged journey which was involved; among the islands, they had very low value and occupied only a small part of the cultivated land. At no time was the European trade in spices of great volume and the Dutch merchants were obliged to make sure that it remained small if spices were to be saleable at great profit in Europe. For long periods less than a dozen ships a year



(Above) In the 18th century Malacca was a Dutch commercial stronghold second only in importance to Batavia. Even then, it appears, the shallow approaches prevented large ships coming close inshore. Old buildings of this Dutch colonial period still stand in Malacca. (Below) Sir Stamford Raffles probably used copies of this map dated 1778. Although fairly accurate otherwise, it curiously shows Singapore with a great channel east to west across it which does not now exist

From 'The East India Pilot', by courtesy of the Royal Geographical Society



made the journey from the Indies to Europe. The glamour of the region and the great gambling profits it made possible to a few Europeans have given the Spice Trade a reputation in history which its small volume scarcely justifies.

Hence, for centuries after the arrival of Europeans, only minor changes were caused in the methods and quantities of agricultural production of the region. That the volume was so small explains why the Europeans adopted the system of small trading posts, factories or stations, as they were variously called. Security in the straits and a safe port of call were all that the European merchantmen needed.

Until the middle of the 19th century, only mercantile companies were interested in the region, not the European governments, and the general policy was to avoid territorial acquisition. The Dutch who were trading in the Indies at the beginning of the 17th century had assumed direct control of only a few scattered patches by the end of it, and at the beginning of the 19th century still did not control all the

island of Java. They held only a small area in Southern Sumatra and South Borneo. This idea of avoiding local commitments persisted almost to the end of the 19th century in the case of the British, who were reluctant to assume responsibility within Malaya and even until 1874 declined to penetrate into the Peninsula from the trading stations which we know as the Straits Settlements. The system of 'indirect rule' which developed more especially in South-East Asia, may be interpreted as resulting from reluctance to assume direct territorial responsibility in an area so far from the European capitals. We have heard much of European predatory aims in Asia: the political geography of South-East Asia indicates that European diffidence and reluctance have been equally strong factors in shaping the patterns we see there today. Of the European powers that came east, only the French had other than trading ambitions and they arrived late, in 1862, to settle in Cambodia and Annam, on the outer fringe of two colonizing empires in decay, the Hindu and the Chinese. The reluctance of governments in Europe and the division of East Asia into highly personal despotisms meant that individuals and companies were often left to act on their own and



Stanford, London

arrange whatever facilities they could negotiate with oriental potentates. The result was a complicated and uncoordinated political pattern and anachronistic treaties varying greatly from one part of the Far East to another. How few of us realize that Sir Stamford Raffles first took possession of Singapore Island against the wishes of the British Government! When these parts of the world were at least five months' journey from Western Europe, the man on the spot to a large extent acted on his own initiative. In the history of earlier Dutch territorial expansion in the Indies, the same highly individualist conditions were evident.

The pattern of the Archipelago as we see it now, distributed between Dutch and British interests, dates only from the Napoleonic Wars. British traders had maintained since 1685 their station at Benkoelen, in south-west Sumatra. This proved a white elephant while British interests were concentrated in India. In 1796, a British company obtained the deserted Penang Island by arrangement with a Malay sultan. It was used as port of call and harbourage for ships making the India-China journey. The Dutch were firmly established in the decaying fort of Malacca and in close alliance with the sultanate of

Johore, which was then a typical amphibious political unit covering the southernmost tip of Malaya, the islands of the Rhio and Lingga archipelagos, a portion of East Sumatra, and the western horn of Borneo. The Dutch paramountcy in the Indies was not at first disputed, but the changing balance of forces in Europe then, as in the present war, produced alterations in the influences and patterns in South-East Asia. By occupying Holland, Napoleon gave the British East India Company an excuse to capture the Dutch fort at Malacca and establish it as a new British trading station in the Straits. British fought and conquered the Dutch in Java, so that the Empire of the Islands became entirely British in 1811 with Raffles as British Governor of the Indies. At the end of the Napoleonic Wars the Indies were returned to the Dutch; but in the few years of British control, many changes had been started and things never went back to what they had been before.

This act of restitution followed the British policy of the time—to avoid territorial responsibility and the deployment of British forces too far afield. Yet British trade in the Straits was intensifying: by the beginning of the 19th century British commerce with China equalled that with India and the trade in cotton and opium from British India to China had become of major significance. Raffles came back to the Straits, looking for a first-class British trading station because Penang was already proving inadequate for this purpose. He looked at the Siak and Karimon Islands and passed on. He chose the almost uninhabited island of Singapore and formally took possession of it in 1819. The Dutch looked upon the new British outpost as an infringement of their interests. This untidy pattern—the British stations in Benkoelen, Penang and Singapore; the Dutch at Malacca and in South Sumatra-was simplified by treaty in 1824 when Benkoelen was exchanged for Malacca, the British forswore interest in Sumatra and the Dutch relinquished alliances in Malaya. Thereafter the Malacca Strait was a boundary as well as a channel of international trade; on one side were the British Straits Settlements and Malaya, and on the other, Dutch interestsa pattern which continued unchanged until the recent war in the Far East, the course of which demonstrated again that the power controlling the Straits, whether British or Japanese, does in effect dominate all the Indies.

European economic policies in the Archipelago have varied. Almost from the beginning the Dutch had been obliged to adopt restrictionist measures in the Moluccas to prevent too many cloves being grown and, in keeping with commercial ethics of their time, to safeguard the trade for themselves by limiting the number of go-betweens involved. These restrictions on cultivation in the 17th century were paralleled by the rubber, tin, coffee and sugar restriction schemes which were introduced in the 20th century. Possibly the equatorial climate makes this cycle inevitable: discovering a crop with a market in Europe and suitable for growing near the Equator; cultivating the crop, only to find the yield quickly become so great that it exceeds what the market can absorb; being compelled to limit cultivation if the price is not to be forced down to ruinous levels and great stock

piles left rotting far from markets.

The effects of European penetration into this region have above all been agricultural and economic. None of the indigenous plants, apart from spices, have had any value. Sugar, coffee, tea, rubber and cinchona, which have at different times been the basis of past European cultivations, were all introduced from abroad after European experiment. Many of the vegetables and even the present staple, rice, were introduced from The benevolent climate produces much for little human effort: in that sense it is a rich region, the more so because the climate also makes the need for dress, housing and fuel to be less in this zone than in other latitudes. So small are the individual's needs, and so easy the return for anything he may do on the land, that money has little significance. Europeans introduced money, but from the beginning they had difficulty in stimulating that movement of goods which makes possible the revenue which European administration needs. In the early days, the Dutch East India Company overcame this difficulty by cultivating for itself and by using Java as a base for international trade in Far Eastern waters, though in this last they had to compete with the Chinese and Indian merchantmen who never really ceased to be active. Later, in the 19th century, the Dutch introduced in Java what came to be called the 'Culture System'. Under this, taxation was levied in kind, by decreeing that a certain fraction of each man's land should be cultivated as directed by the Government with labour provided by his family; the proceeds in kind were Government property. All the great innovations in Indonesian agriculture were made by this scheme which was both educative and productive.

At the end of the 19th century, British



From 'Memoirs of the Life and Public Services of Sir T. S. Raffles, F.R.S.' (John Murray)



Sketches and views of old Singapore are very difficult to find even though the town dates only from 1819. This amateur water colour published by Lady Raffles in 1830 shows the harbour and its shipping, Singapore River and its warehouses as Raffles saw them from Government Hill

Every inch the pioneer and empirebuilder, Sir Stamford Raffles as agent of the East India Company took over all the Indies by the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Remarkably versatile, he wrote detailed reports of many aspects of life in the Malay Archipelago, where Singapore stands as monument to his personal initiative

National Portrait Gallery

administrators in Malaya were in similar difficulties. Their innovation of rubber planting resulted from seeking a means of stimulating agriculture and revenue. The method they used was different: foreign labour from India and China was brought in to do the work. These labourers in the plantations and mines wanted money to buy their daily needs and to send back to their families. This need for money stimulated trade and thus the Malayan revenue came as a natural consequence.

These European devices to stimulate production had an unexpected secondary effect. They placed a premium on population. In Malaya the additional population was immigrant, creating the problem of plural societies whose digestion into a coherent political unit is our immediate problem today. In Java, the agricultural intensification brought about by the Dutch 'Culture System' imposed a demand upon individual families which were expected to provide labour as part of their obligation to cultivate under government direction. Here was a great incentive to large families. The more children, the less onerous was the family's responsibility on that part of the land where official instructions had to be carried out. This stimulus was the greater because all the new crops were of a type needing manual labour at all stages of cultivation: in tea, coffee, sugar, rubber and cinchona farming, mechanization played no part—it was hands and more hands. The Dutch themselves soon appreciated that their 'Culture System' was becoming an onerous burden upon families and they abandoned the system in 1870, though its end did not change the trend in agriculture which it had started, so that Java today is a model of intensive equatorial agriculture.

In Malaya, where agricultural development was deferred until much later, the number of people increased six times from 1885 to 1931. In few parts of teeming Asia have population increases of this magnitude occurred over the same period. The increases give Malaya and Java most critical internal conditions, the former by its immigrant groups, the latter by its fantastic rate of growth, which is now three-quarters of a

million per annum.

The extraordinary disparities of population density in this region of islands always puzzle those who meet them for the first time. Java has 817 people per square mile; all the other islands, including Sumatra, less than 30 per square mile. Malaya has 82 per square mile. It is conventional to look for an explanation of these variations in physical differences of

soil, but though the factors are many, the greatest single impetus to dense population has been the administrative intervention of Europeans in certain places and their economic innovations operating upon the Hindu tradition which permeates the Javanese family systems. Towards the end of the 'Culture System' Java's population was increasing at the rate of 33 per cent per decade; before it, at the end of the 18th century, the rate was of the order of 10 per cent per decade, and in our own time is about 16 per cent per decade. Intensified agriculture in Java has worked to give that island the densest population of any major unit in the world. Nowhere else has there been such a tremendous interference in the human ecology of equatorial regions as Dutch agricultural planning in Java during the last century. It has produced demographic changes at a rate which makes modern Java a region of explosive instability.

European influence has also affected the political pattern. Java seems destined to remain for a long time to come the leader of the islands, a function which falls to it by virtue of its population (two-thirds of all Netherlands East Indies people live there) which has grown in turn from its historic function as chief base for Dutch activity. At no time in its previous history was Java the political centre for the whole region. Indian colony or empire based on this island ever controlled Sumatra, Borneo and all the other islands now mapped as the Netherlands East Indies, and in that earlier colonial period there seems to have been no such great disparity of population as we see today in Java and Sumatra. The Dutch have fostered the weight of population which makes the function of leadership inevitable in the future, fixed by cultural and commercial associations tying Java to all the surrounding islands.

Malaya is on the edge of this world. It is not an island and has never been part of a Javanese empire. Since the beginning of last century it has not felt any tie with the Dutch sphere. In population it is more Chinese than anything else, a fact which is likely to perpetuate its separateness from the Empire of the Islands, although as a political unit Malaya is very young. As mapped today, it did not take form until 1909. There is little cultural or traditional association between Malaya and Java, and if the present plans to knit the former into one nation are successful in merging its Malay, Chinese and Indian stocks, an entirely distinctive nationality will be created and will perpetuate the differences between Malaya and the East Indies.

## Ambush on the Danube

by JASPER ROOTHAM

The following episode is extracted from Miss Fire, to be published shortly by Chatto and Windus, in which Colonel Rootham records the events of which he was a witness in Serbia in 1943-44 as a member of a British Mission attached to the Chetnik forces of General Mihailovich. In a forthcoming number we shall publish an article describing some aspects of reconstruction in Yugoslavia under the regime of Marshal Tito, to the establishment of which those events were the prelude

We set off early the next morning with our little force, consisting of ourselves, armed with rifles, of which Erik's and mine had telescopic sights, Second Lieutenant Milojkovich with a Sten gun, the Danube pilot with a rifle, and about eighteen other shaggy-bearded ragamuffins, two carrying German light machine guns and the rest rifles. clothes ranged from British battle-dress and Yugoslav army uniform, down through the green uniform of Nedich's militia and peasant clothing, to a blue serge suit worn by a fat man who, we were told, was going to fire the 20-mm. anti-tank gun. We noticed that the gun was not with us and were told that it was being recovered from its hiding-place and would follow us later.

We had not been going for more than half an hour when, in conversation with Miloj-kovich and the Danube pilot, it transpired that their orders were that we were not going on the operation at all, but merely on a reconnaissance for an operation which was to take place at some future, unspecified date. After a short conference we sent Milojkovich back with a message from Erik, as the senior officer, for Velja, saying that we had understood that it was the operation itself that we were setting out to perform, and that we would move no further than the place at which we were to spend the night unless or until the 20-mm.

gun arrived.

We then continued our march for two hours or so, until we reached a very dirty salash, where we were to sleep. It was only afternoon, the sky had clouded over, we had nothing to do but wait, and life seemed drab. At about eleven o'clock, when it was beginning to appear that guerilla war certainly, and life itself in all probability, were in no sense worth while, Second Lieutenant Milojkovich arrived. We saw, to our horror, that he was accompanied by the bullying Slovene, who carried a letter from Velia.

Velja wrote that he was amazed that we had not understood that we were only a reconnaissance party, and that he could only



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attribute it to our ignorance of the language; otherwise his hopes for fruitful cooperation in the future would be feeble. He emphasized how necessary was careful preparation for an operation of this kind, and wrote that he had proposed to synchronize it with another operation on October 30. He did not, incidentally, say what this operation was, nor had he mentioned it to me the night before. We read this letter—indeed it was more of a tirade than a letter—with sinking hearts, and were therefore all the more surprised when, in the last paragraph, Velja wrote that, none the less, he was prepared to sanction the operation now, and had sent the Slovene to ensure success.

It seemed to us that this was an attempt, by indirect methods, to stop the operation, but we determined not to allow it, and showed Milojkovich, the Slovene, and the Danube pilot Velja's letter, saying that we interpreted it as permission to proceed, and did they agree? After some hesitation, they did. We knew that the Danube pilot himself was strongly in favour of the action, and on that account unpopular with some of Velja's

officers. He managed to get a few words with us on the quiet, and said in effect that if we did not see the action through, nobody else

would

Early on the morning of October 24 we inspected the 20-mm. gun with which had been brought twelve rounds of ammunition, six explosive and six armour-piercing. was the gun which had been dropped to us some months earlier, without any telescopic sights, and for which, in spite of our requests, no sights had yet arrived. The Serbs did not fail to point this out, and also the fact that, since there was no peep-sight either, it would be impossible to aim the gun. The Slovene, striking an attitude, cried dramatically, "It is hopeless to attack in the circumstances. But if you desire it, we will carry out the attack with staves." We replied crossly that staves were not a suitable weapon for use against a moving target in the middle of the largest river in Europe, and said that we would rig up a sight. This Scorgie, whom it is impossible to praise enough for his endurance, calm, and shrewd advice during this fantastic and fatiguing affair into which he had been projected after only a week in the country, managed to do. He set two horsehairs in a cross over the end of the empty container for the telescopic sight, and satisfied the Serbs that it would work.

At about 8.30 in the morning we set off. Our aim was to reach the area of Boljetin, a village about a kilometre from the Danube, some miles upstream from Donji Milanovac. Between us and Boljetin lay a tract of thick forest and precipitous valleys which, so Velja had warned us, was the hardest marching and the most sparsely inhabited region of all

Eastern Serbia.

The country became worse and worse, and we had nothing to eat. We had with us one pack-horse with our kit on it, and a very small donkey, which was carrying the 20-mm. gun. How they survived I do not know, for the way in places was so steep that it was sometimes almost a question of hands and feet for a human being. Towards afternoon we came to a little cottage, where we got some bread and cheese, and the peasant's wife cooked kachamak for the troops. Erik, the Danube pilot and I went off to see how close we were to the Danube. We were still several miles from the spot we wanted to reach, and it was clear that we would have to move nearer for the night.

By eight o'clock the next morning the Danube pilot, Milojkovich, Erik and I were on the way to the river to reconnoitre the target and settle the position for the troops.

Erik and I were 'disguised', that is to say, we had taken off our berets and were wearing thick peasant coats over our battle-dress. It was very hot. By half-past nine in the morning we were ensconced in a wood about four hundred yards above the Danube, studying the river traffic and the Rumanian barracks on the far bank through our glasses. The Rumanian sentry strolled idly up and down the dusty road which ran beside the river, and chatted with some peasants in a horse-drawn cart with large wheels and of a quite different pattern from those we had seen in Yugoslavia. Five tugs came upstream, each pulling two barges, and the Danube pilot showed us the exact spot in the channel at which it would be best to open fire. We watched the coloured disks at the signal station a mile upstream going up and down to indicate to the ships whether they could proceed or not. The pilot explained to us that these stations were linked by telephone all the way up and down the river. He also pointed out to us the direction in which, exactly below us, and no more than two hundred yards as the crow flies, but about two hundred feet lower down, there were posted some ten White Russian soldiers. There were forty more in the village of Boljetin, a kilometre away, so it was essential that we achieve surprise and make a quick getaway when the action was over.

Both the Rumanian side, which was mountainous but more open, and our own thickly wooded side presented a peaceful picture under the autumn sun. It was amusing to think what a hullabaloo there would have been if the Rumanians and Russians had

known what was being planned.

We selected the position for the troops. It was at the forward edge of a wood, and had a good field of fire down to the vital stretch of the river about four hundred yards away and a hundred feet below us. The way back was convenient, for it lay through ground which was 'dead' to fire from the Rumanian bank, though the position itself was partially exposed to it. We decided that we must be in position by dawn the following day, and at three o'clock in the afternoon left the Danube and returned to a cottage about a mile away, from which we sent a messenger to fetch the troops. Dinner consisted of soup and some sweet red wine, and at eight o'clock we retired to bed in a straw sack. At 9.30 we were awakened by the arrival of Scorgie and the troops, with our rifles and ammunition. We spent a very cold night, as straw is not warming and we had left our greatcoats and sleeping-bags on our pack-horse in charge of Mr Foles, two or three miles off. We did not want to lose them if there was going to be

difficulty about getting away.

At three o'clock on the morning of October 26 we set off. We had been very worried about the behaviour of the troops during the previous two days. They had been noisy and more than a little inclined to drink, and the Slovene, who was senior to Milojkovich, had not shown any inclination to pull them up. But now, nobody could have wished for a keener, more silent and more patient body of men. We moved like ghosts until we reached a wood about five hundred yards from the river, and then sent the men down, two by two, to their stations, which had been chosen by Milojkovich. They were all in position by five o'clock in the morning.

The first traffic to appear was travelling downstream and we did not attack it, because we thought that a target moving upstream, and towards us, offered much better chances. At seven o'clock thick fog came down, and we used it to advance our positions slightly, and to send the 20-mm. gun round to the right flank. Erik, Scorgie and I shared the one American 'K' ration, and Scorgie and I stole back fifty yards or so into the woods to have a smoke. Until we did this, not a man among the Chetniks had stirred, but now one

or two followed our example.

At about 9.15 A.M., with the mist lifting, we heard the throb of engines and the thud of paddles coming upstream from Donji Milanovac, and three minutes after that we saw two tugs, each drawing two barges. We found out later that the first was the German tug. Centaur and the second the Dutch tug Amsterdam. I do not know how the others felt, but I noticed my heart bumping nervously in time with the paddles of the Centaur as it drew nearer and I watched it through my telescopic sight.

On they came, and we waited for the Danube pilot to give the first shot, the agreed signal to open fire. He seemed to be leaving it very late—though I believe that really this was not so—and I was just about to twiddle my sights down from four hundred to three hundred yards when the warning shot cracked out. Everybody blazed away then, and there was a terrific racket, with the machine guns stuttering away and plenty of rifle fire, all of it greatly magnified by the echo from

the hills on the Rumanian side.

We could see smoke and steam coming from the superstructure of the *Centaur*, and just before it reached the exit from the swiftrunning channel it seemed to stop for a moment. Then, with bells ringing madly, it went forward again, and steamed out of the channel into still water, where it stopped. There seemed to be something wrong with the barges which it had in tow, and the Danube pilot later told us that he thought they had gone aground. The second tug appeared to be stationary in mid-channel, and for a few moments we transferred our attention to it. But by now the troops in the Rumanian barracks had pulled themselves together and there was quite an amount of fire from them coming our way, including machine-gun fire. Erik coolly took a photograph, which unfortunately came out very poorly, of the tugs and their barges, all stationary; and Scorgie fired a parting shot at the Rumanian sentry on the far bank, who had, he said, been jumping up and down like a jack-in-the-box. The bullet kicked up the dust at his feet, and he made a spectacular dive for the shelter of the barracks wall.

It was clear, however, that the operation had failed of its main object, which was, as I have explained, to cause the tug to sink in the channel. The second tug was certainly stationary and still in the channel, but it did not seem to be aground, and was probably simply keeping its engines going enough to remain head-on to the current. We took a few pot-shots at it, but it was too far away for them to be effective, and it was plainly time to go. The little machine-gunner—a tailor in private life—did not want to come. He was cursing and swearing as he fired, and was

almost in tears of rage.

We got up from our firing positions, took a last look at the Centaur, which had smoke pouring from her superstructure, and dived over the ridge into the dead ground beyond. One or two bullets swished through the leaves above our heads, but that was all, except that, for a reason which I have never been able to explain, something which sounded like anti-aircraft fire began some way off, upstream, and continued for about five minutes. No projectile fell anywhere near us, and I cannot understand what they were firing at, or why.

When we got on to the path which led us away into the hills again, there was some trouble in getting the 20-mm. gun on to the donkey, which was nervous after the firing. But we were on the move at 9.35 A.M., twenty minutes after we had first heard the sound of the *Centaur*'s engines. Scorgie said that the firing itself had only lasted for eight

and a half minutes.

There was no sign of any enemy troops, but we heard some scattered shots from Milojkovich, who had remained nearer the river to cover our retreat. We started off at a brisk pace and marched without stopping for an hour. We rested for five minutes and then went on for another hour, after which we sat down and waited for Milojkovich, who appeared about ten minutes later, bathed in sweat. Shortly after this the White Russian garrison of Boljetin, who must still have been floundering about near the river, about three miles from where we were, fired some dignified bursts-evidently at nothing-on what sounded like Schwarzlose machine guns. The men were as excited as children, chattering and boasting, but nobody could have been quicker or more patient than they were during the long tedious period of waiting in the early morning mist.

We had not only achieved surprise but had got clean away as well, and having regard to the kind of country that we were operating in, it was not to be wondered at. I am convinced that if a number of such attacks had been made, over a period of time, along the stretch of the Danube between Golubac and Turnu-Severin, the Germans would, militarily, have found it almost impossible to stop them without using a disproportionately large number of troops, and there is no doubt that the effect on the Danube traffic would have been, to say the least, clogging.

Nobody knew the military difficulties better than the Germans, and so, although they did take certain measures, such as increasing the garrisons at Donji Milanovac and Kladovo, their immediate and most efficacious reaction was different. Some four days after the operation we were brought one of the handbills that had been printed and distributed by the Germans in Donji Milanovac, Golubac and other places along the Danube. It was printed on pink paper in German and in Serbian, and was signed by the German Kreis Kommandant. It said that on October 22 two German soldiers had been killed by "bandits" near Kladovo (this

had been done by Jevtich's men), and on October 26 some more "bandits" had attacked German shipping on the Danube and had killed the captain of the Centaur, who was a German. These acts of lawlessness, the leaflet went on, had neither inconvenienced the German military authorities nor interrupted the Danube traffic in the slightest; they had, however, caused the deaths of one hundred and fifty sympathizers of the movement of Drazha Mihailovich, who had been shot in Belgrade on October 28 as a reprisal.

It was not, as we afterwards discovered, true that no interruption had been caused in the Danube traffic. There was considerable interruption for several days, and the Centaur had to be towed downstream to Turnu-Severin for repair. The source of our information was an agent of Nash's, who was employed on the river and was on the bridge of the Centaur at the time. He did not speak very highly of our firing. He, of course, had no idea that there was going to be an attack, any more than we knew that Nash had an agent on the boat. His information was confirmed by that

which Velja gave us.

None the less, this handbill was a very distressing document to us. It was not so much the fact that its receipt by the inhabitants caused our popularity to slump considerably, which, aided by the non-arrival of any planes, it did. It was because for this sacrifice of innocent lives no military objective of comparable importance had been achieved. and we knew well that it was we ourselves who had forced the action. We thought also rather bitterly about the 20-mm. gun with the horsehair sights. The gunner had managed to get off nine shots, of which five scored hits. We could not help wondering whether the result would have been different if the gun had had its telescopic sights. The Serbs left us in no doubt about their opinion on this matter.





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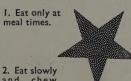
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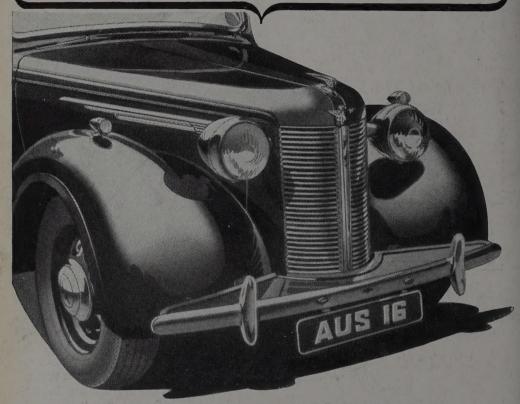


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